

California letters of Lucius Fairchild

PUBLICATIONS OF THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

EDITED BY JOSEPH SCHAFER SUPERINTENDENT OF THE SOCIETY

CALIFORNIA LETTERS OF LUCIUS FAIRCHILD

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS

COLLECTIONS VOLUME XXXI

SARGENT's PORTRAIT OF GENERAL LUCIUS FAIRCHILD (Original in the State Historical Museum, Madison)

CONSIN HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS

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CALIFORNIA LETTERS OF LUCIUS FAIRCHILD

EDITED WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTION BY JOSEPH SCHAFER SUPERINTENDENT
OF THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

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INTRODUCTION

The letters herewith presented have a two-fold significance. On the one hand, as readers will be quick to discern, they constitute a new and vivid commentary upon the perennially interesting history of the gold rush and life in the California mines. To be sure their author, like nearly all of those upon whose narratives our knowledge of conditions in the gulches and on the river bars of the Golden State depends, wrote as an eager gold seeker busily panning, rocking, or sluicing the sands of some hundred foot mining claim. His picture of California, at any given moment, had to be generalized, so to speak, from the “color” at the bottom of his testing pan. His particular camp, company, or environmental coup symbolized for him the prevailing conditions social, economic, and moral.

While this was inevitable, it was by no means a misfortune, for a certain uniformity prevailed throughout the mining field and the witness who by intensive living gained a true insight into a given unit had qualifications for interpreting the entire gold digging society. Besides, Fairchild, while less mobile than the proverbial prospector, who was never happy except when searching for “better diggings,” shifted about considerably in the course of his six years' residence in California as his itinerary shows. The interval between Calaveras County mouth of the Sacramento, where he began digging, and Scott Valley, near the Oregon boundary, where his California vi career was closed, is not merely a pretty stretch of miles and diversified landscapes, but it includes the greater part of the early gold mining area. Over that scope of country young Fairchild ranged in a way to become reasonably familiar with the leading communities scattered through it. In addition, he visited San Francisco, and received from friends occasional reports about the region south, as far as San Diego. It can be said, therefore, that taken all together, the letters throw much light on gold mining from the early prospecting days to those of the fluming and quartz-crushing era.

The story Fairchild tells of the trip to California in 1849 is naturally less detailed than that related by some of the well known diarists among the Argonauts. Yet the long and intimate descriptive letters he wrote from St. Joseph, Missouri, and from the river steamboats between Dubuque and that place, give a charming picture of the preliminaries and preparations for the journey across the plains. It would be hard to find other groups of letters or extant diaries which make so palpable conditions at Missouri River concentration points as do the letters herewith published under dates of April 23, and 24, May 2.5, 11, and 13, 1849.

Fairchild kept a kind of current record of experiences as his letters show, and in some instances he summarizes the movements of his party in accordance with the entries contained therein. This diary, kept up in some fashion though not always day by day, for several years, has not been found among the Fairchild papers; but the letters have the double advantage of being contemporaneous with the events narrated and at the same

THE FAIRCHILD HOME, MADISON

vii time free from the tedium of the diarist's schedule of routine facts. History is served by them quite as effectually, in most respects, as it could be by the unvaryingly regular daily journal.

The larger interest of this volume, however, to the people of Wisconsin, whose generosity makes possible its publication, is in the relation of the experiences disclosed to the career of one of their cherished leaders of the past generation. From the beginning of the Civil War to the day of his death, the genial spirit of Lucius Fairchild captivated the imagination of the people of his state. They applauded his gallantry on the field of battle, which won him promotion to the rank of brigadier general, trusted him in politics as three successive elections to the governorship testify, and followed with justifiable pride his distinguished service to the nation in the diplomatic field. This was not merely because Fairchild always threw himself whole-heartedly into the performance of every assigned task, doing his work well and capably, but because there was about him a subtle personal quality that irradiated his activities, rendering him under all circumstances interesting to his fellow citizens and on occasion dramatically gripping. These letters, the spontaneous outpouring

of a boy who was now separated for the first time irrevocably from home and loved ones, will hereafter form an ideal introduction to the study of Lucius Fairchild.

With this thought in mind, the editor has been doubly careful to reproduce the letters *verbatim et literatim*. Whereas, in the case of letters or diaries designed solely to throw light on historical situations, it is allowable for the reader's comfort to modernize the punctuation if not the spelling, no such liberties could be taken with the present series of documents. Accordingly, they reflect their author's progress in epistolary self-expression during these formative years.

Lucius Fairchild was born December 27, 1831, and was, therefore, seventeen years and three months old when, on the thirty-first of March, 1849, his ox-drawn covered wagon rolled ponderously out of the village of Madison, headed for the alluring land of gold. His father, Jairus C. Fairchild, a native of the state of New York, had married Sarah (Sally) Blair of Massachusetts and settled as a merchant in Kent, Ohio, where this son was born. Later they removed to Cleveland and in 1846 came to Madison. The family included a daughter named Sarah (like her mother), and three sons, Cassius, Lucius, and Charles, in that order. The daughter was soon married to Eliab B. Dean, a native of Massachusetts, and later, as Madame Conover, became a very distinguished leader of Madison society. Cassius and Lucius who had received educational advantages in Cleveland and at an Ohio boarding school, were placed for several terms in Carroll Academy at Waukesha. But at the time the news of the gold discovery reached Madison, it found both boys helping to conduct their fathers mercantile establishment and associated business ventures, the elder Fairchild having been elected state treasurer of Wisconsin in 1848, and being reelected the next year. Cassius stuck to the business until the Civil War broke, when both he and Lucius received commissions, each of them being quickly promoted to the rank of colonel. At Shiloh, Cassius received a serious wound from the effects of which he finally died in 1868. Charles, the younger brother, profited from the college education Lucius in these letters continually urged him to strive for, served in the navy during the war, and afterwards became prominent in business and brokerage circles both at Boston and at New York.

In 1848 and 1849 the Fairchilds erected the fine brick residence overlooking Lake Monona, a few rods from the state capitol, which figures so prominently in the social annals of Madison, first as the Jairus Fairchild home from the summer of 1849, then as the home of Lucius Fairchild until his death in 1896, and lastly, as the home of his widow until her death in 1925. Thereafter the house was dismantled, the heirs turning over the Fairchild papers, accumulations of three generations, to the State Historical Society which received also, as a bequest from Mrs. Lucius Fairchild, the John Singer Sargent portrait of her husband which is reproduced in this volume.

The new brick house was practically completed before Lucius left Madison, though the family had not yet occupied it, and the picture of "home" which he carried to the gold mines was of his father, mother, sister, brother-in-law (and their small daughter), and two brothers assembled at the fire-place in the spacious drawing room. The Fairchilds were a prosperous, intelligent, high minded, affectionate group, and the boy realized that he had more to keep him at home, or, having broken away, to bring him back with the least possible x delay, than was at all common among the Argonauts. "Only thinking of you," wrote Lucius to his home folks on his second Christmas in California, "is happiness enough for one common mortal, and if I could think that I am as dear to you as you are to me I believe I should burst with a sound like a pop gun." Fredrika Bremer's account of these good people in the brick house who entertained her in October, 1850 is the classic picture of the Fairchild home which this boy had temporarily exchanged for a "brush house," or at best a log cabin in the mines.*

Fredrika Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, translated by Mary Howitt (New York, Harpers, 1853), i, 630-631. A portion of the description reads as follows: "I am with a family of the name of F. The master of the house, who is a judge [sic.] of the state, is now from home; but his wife [Sally Blair Fairchild] and their young married daughter [Sarah Fairchild Dean], who resides with her parents, have given me the most agreeable reception. And it is hardly possible to imagine a more charming picture than that which is here presented by the three generations--mother, daughter, and grandchild. The elderly lady is delicate and graceful, and still handsome; the daughter with a certain look of Jenny Lind about her, and an expression of unspeakable goodness in her blonde countenance, is the most charming of young women, and her little girl is one of those loveable little creatures which not only mother and grandmother but every stranger, even, must regard as quite out of the common way, gifted even while in the cradle with unusual powers and more than earthly grace."

Notwithstanding these strong home ties, the spirit of adventure in Lucius was so overmastering as to compel him to leave all to go to California, though he never weakened in his settled purpose to

return to Madison after making his “pile.” At the outset he expected to obtain in a few months gold enough to satisfy his desire, and, therefore, fondly hoped to be back by the end of the year 1850. In this series of letters, one sees how the date of the return journey was postponed from time to time because the boy had a manly pride in winning success xi and, despite the pleadings of his family, refused to confess failure by going home empty handed, or with less than a tidy fortune.

A striking proof of his ripening judgment, under the sobering influence of reverses, is his decision to leave off digging as a major interest and engage in less speculative business; also, the tenacity with which he held to the partnership with Mr. Steele, whose business sagacity he regarded as an invaluable asset. In fact, according to these letters, it was his willingness to be guided by the older man and to throw all his energy into the execution of plans for which Steele was primarily responsible, that Fairchild was enabled, after six years, to return home with a modest “pile.” Other young men of his acquaintance, with opportunities equal to his own, who had not the wisdom and self-mastery to be amenable to the advice of older heads, either wrecked their careers in California or arrived home poorer than when they started out.

California tempered for Lucius the Puritanism which still, to some extent, dominated the home. The elder Fairchild was deeply religious, though with a somewhat liberal theology, was a strict temperance man of the “teetotal” variety, and was opposed to smoking, swearing, gambling, and Sunday amusements. Lucius acquired one “vice,” as he called it, soon after beginning his journey—namely, smoking a pipe. But, instead of trying to hide the fact from the home folks, he wrote about it with perfect frankness, justifying the habit as bringing to weary travelers much needed comfort. With equal honesty he confessed to the social glass and to one xii instance of over-indulgence which he was determined should be the last. His resolution to return with morals unimpaired was no whit less inviolable than his purpose to bring back a comfortable bag of gold.

Fairchild was a sociable young man, with a gift for friendship which enabled him to gain the good will of all types encountered in the mines, though he habitually associated closely only with the better classes. His experience in California no doubt served as excellent training for the political

life he was destined to enter later. It made him a genuine democrat in his sympathies, while leaving unimpaired his ideals of culture, his innate nobility and charm of character.

Though it left his spelling faulty and his literary style considerably below perfection as sometimes happens also with the best institutions of higher learning, California was nevertheless for him, in many respects, a substitute for college and university. His was the type of mind which learns from life and during the six years away from home he encountered life in its most diverse forms and at its most dynamic moments.

Returning to Wisconsin in the summer of 1855, Fairchild joined his father and brother at Madison in various business ventures. He considered his formal schooling as being completed; but during the succeeding few years private study and reading in the law prepared him for admission to the bar, and in 1859 he was elected clerk of the circuit court. This position he held until the Civil War burst upon the land when he was one of the first to respond to Governor Randall's call for three months' volunteers. His Civil War letters, admirable xiii in form as in matter, prove that since his return from California, he had given himself a rigorous self-training in the niceties of composition.

The governor had offered him a lieutenant colonelcy, which was declined, but he accepted election as captain of Company K, First Wisconsin Volunteers. By promotion he soon became colonel of the Second Wisconsin. At Gettysburg, in leading the counter attack on Pickett, he lost his left arm, came home from the hospital to regain his health and while there was nominated by the state Republican convention for Secretary of state, to which office he was chosen. There followed three terms as governor, from January 1, 1866 to January 1, 1872. He then spent five years as United States consul at Liverpool, a term as consul general at Paris, and finally was asked to succeed James Russell Lowell as minister at the Spanish Court. These engagements kept him in Europe until 1882 when he returned to Madison where he spent his remaining fourteen years in the enjoyment of private life. He died at Madison, May 25, 1896.

This is not the place to evaluate the career of Lucius Fairchild, but some of the more discriminating comments on the man, made within a few months of his death, will help the reader of these

California letters to appreciate what an unusual personality it was that they see functioning in the social and business life of the mines, and which the mining experience helped to bring to fruition. Said E. W. Keyes, who had known him from before he went to California until the end of his life: “General Fairchild was never a ‘kicker’; he went xiv smoothly through the world. He never stirred up strife. His mission seemed to be to smooth out the rough places and to establish harmonious relations where they should exist; and his pleasant words and kindly bearing strongly affected those whom he met in the ordinary walks of life.”

“He had,” said Charles Kendall Adams, president of the University of Wisconsin, “an open and kind heart, that went out to the poor as well as to the rich. His kindly feeling was as universal as his charity and his generosity, and it was not strange that when he died the poorest who knew him mourned his death as much as anybody we met around his open grave. He had the ways of the supreme gentleman. His courtesy went out to everybody. . . . Wherever he was he threw open the doors of his existence, and welcomed us all to the great affluence of his nature.”

At Fort Childs [Kearney], Chimney Rock, Fort Laramie, and other points on the trail, in 1849, the Fairchild party encountered the Mounted Rifle Regiment which was on its way to Oregon. In the transcript of his diary of the journey, the young gold seeker grows facetious in speaking of that military aggregation, calling it a great nuisance on the road. “I believe,” he adds in a spirit of mischief, “they wanted the protection of the Wisconsin Star Company.” Be that as it may, the regiment contributed something to the sources of gold rush history, first in the elaborate journal of Major Osborne Cross, the quartermaster, and second, in a series of sketches of scenes and incidents on the route which probably were executed by Lieutenant Andrew Jackson xv Lindsay.* These sketches, fifty in number, are now the property of this Society, and from the list selections have been made to illustrate that portion of the route which terminates at Soda and Steamboat Springs, where the Rifle Regiment turned north to Fort Hall and Oregon. Fairchild himself landed at Weston in the steamer *Bay State*, and of course saw from its deck the famous western outpost, Fort Leavenworth, which was our artist's starting point. Ed George and Ben Wilson, his partners, with

the team and covered wagon, doubtless passed the “Nodaway Mill,” and the “Prairie Home” before arriving at the Missouri ferry. The other illustrations are self-explanatory.

See Osborne Cross, *Journal of the March of the Mounted Rifle Regiment* (Washington, 1851); and Joseph Schafer, “Trailing a Trail Artist of 1849,” *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, xii, 97-108. JOSEPH SCHAFER
Madison, Wisconsin June 20, 1930

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CALIFORNIA LETTERS OF LUCIUS FAIRCHILD

1

CALIFORNIA LETTERS OF LUCIUS FAIRCHILD

To Eliab B. Dean *

His brother-in-law.

Mineral Pt Tuesday Morn [April] 1849 I recieved that big package this morning by Nickols for
which I am very much obliged but more particularly for the pictures which will be a great comfort
to me when I get *down in the mouth* It will be a pleasure to look at, (old Growley) even, when I
look down a little and See your face Sarah's I am very glad to have. She has been a good sister to
me far better than I have been to her.

We have got along first-rate so far and have good times but this morning it rains very hard and we
shall probably be obliged to remain here all day. I can drive cattle very well already, having drove

half of the time so far and read some and then cut round the prairies on the pony. I found mother's ring which I will keep sacred to her memory but I needed nothing to keep her in my mind all of the time but the recollection of past events.

We have eat our regular meals and slept our regular sleep in the waggon and intend to do so all of the time. I do not know how T-- came to meet us at Thomsons nor do I care as I did not care about seeing him. He gamboled and lost all of the time I was in the bar-room 2 and got "hog drunk" after we had gone to the waggon to bed. He made some very mean remarks for which I am sorry I did not hit him.

I am writing in the waggon "all curled up in a little heap" and therefore cannot write very well. I must stop and help tar the wagon. I will write from the next place Your Friend.

Love to Mother and all of the rest.

I was treated first rate at Hickox's by all and spent Sunday night there.

I am very much obliged to Del.

To His Parents Dubouque [Dubuque] Sunday [April 8] 1849 I received all of your letters by Mr. Sutherland yesterday he overtook us seven miles east of this place and gave them to me. * I have hardly recovered myself from the effects of leaving home, the greatest & most important step of my life, leaving all I hold dear on earth to seek a home, however short, in a new and distant country but now that it is done I shall do my very best to make it profit both me and you. I had a lonely very lonely day on which I started but have strove hard to keep up my spirits and have succeeded. We have had a very good time considering the state of the roads which were very good the first three days but 3 scince then they have been horrible causing us to be *stalled* 6 or 7 times and many a time have we had cause to b[l]ess dear Mother, when getting out of mud holes, for providing us with eatables which saved us the trouble Of cooking when [we] were mud from head to foot and tired.

Thomas W. Sutherland, a native of Philadelphia, son of Joel B. Sutherland, was a pioneer of Madison and a lawyer who held the United States District Attorneyship for Wisconsin Territory from 1841 to 1845. He was a

member of the first board of regents of the University and a charter member of the State Historical Society. Taking the southern route to California, he stopped for a time in San Diego, where he held the office of alcalde, then went to San Francisco where he practiced law. He died at Sacramento, February 2, 1859, incumbent of the office of collector of that port, to which he had been appointed in 1857.

Notwithstanding all of the bad roads and trouble we have enjoyed ourselves first rate reading and writing nights by our nice little stove when the rain was pouring down hard, our cover being perfectly waterproof. I have not time to write more fully of our past journey but will of what is to come--We crossed over here last evening and found Count H[araszthy] has started and gone out 3 miles he being a few hours ahead of us. * They are all well with the exception of Mr Riner who had trouble with the ferryman & blows followed words the ferryman hit him on the head with a Stone and very nearly killed him but although it is a very bad bruise he will recover after [a]while.

Agostin Haraszthy, a Hungarian nobleman who, as a political exile from his native land, came to Wisconsin, and in 1842-43 founded Sauk City, first called Haraszthy. In California he became director of the United States mint, and later was celebrated as the father of viticulture in that state. Still later he removed to Nicaragua where he owned vast tracts of land and where he lost his life July 6, 1870. See *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, xiv, 79-80. The career of the count's father, Charles, here called Mr. Riner, is summarized in the same article.

Things have taken a new turn and I am now waiting for a boat to go to St. Louis and from there to St. Jo, Finding that the roads were very bad through Iowa and our load too much for our team we concluded to ship most of our load round to St. Jo. and I was chosen to go with it. I think it is the best plan and will not cost as much as it would damage the team to drag it through the mud. Claghorn & Rasdell do the same 4 and both go also Walker & Smith Smith with me All of the men are well and in good health Ben [Wilson] & Ed [George] among them. * They started this noon to catch Count H-- All send their love--

The men named were all from Madison, Benjamin Wilson and Edwin George being Lucius' partners, the three owning the outfit together. The *Wisconsin Argus*, April 3, 1849, says, "8 or 10 teams have passed through or started from this place [Madison] for California." The same editorial emphasizes the danger that, on account of the vast numbers taking the trail, stock cannot be sustained on the plains, and the rearward trains may perish in the mountains--ideas Lucius noticed in his letter of April 23.

I think we shall go down the river with Sutherland I will remember all you say about the danger of feed being scarce and will not start unless there is a certainty of going through of this you may rest assured. I am at the Maples house all dressed up to fits, waiting for a boat.

I shall call on Miss Holt in St. Louis--It is getting very dark and I cannot write any more now but will write from the next town on the river meantime I remain your true and affectionate friend.

Love to baby and all my friends Goodbye for 2 days

To His Sister Steamer Uncle Toby [April 10, 1849] Six Miles below Albany [Illinois?] Miss. River-- 8 o'clock A.M. Tuesday-- I received your letter by Mr S[utherland] last Saturday and wrote to all of you the following day from Dubuque which is on the way to Madison now. I said that I was waiting for a boat to go to St. Jo. by St. Louis. Yesterday morning this arrived and I, with Claghorn, Rasdell & Smith took passage for St. Jo. to 5 which place this boat is going direct, which saves us the trouble of reshiping our freight again at St. Louis. At Galena Thos Sutherland & wife came on board and are going with us to St. Jo. so that we are all together.

I am sailing on the "Father of Rivers" for the first time in my life and like it very near as well as sailing in Our Ox waggon. We will probably be at St. Louis tomorrow sometime and the boat will lie there two days which will give us all time to look at the city and do our business. Before I consented to go down the river I made enquiries about the *Cholera* being in St. Louis and was assured by those who pretend to know that it had disappeared entirely so that there can be no danger in that respect. The water is so high that there is not the least danger of running on sand-bars or snagging. We have had a good time so far and I hope we shall to our journey's end the prospect is good now.

You ask why I left so quickly when I saw you last. I cannot tell you but if you had been in my situation you could understand my feelings. I cannot tell you of a single time when you have done anything which was not kind & sisterly but on the contrary you have been all a brother could wish or ask.

How is mother and Father Charles, Cash, and that pretty little baby I hope they are well and in good spirits I expect Lotty will be a great girl when I next see her I know she will be pretty--and good if she takes after her parents--We had a very stormy night last night and the wind blows a perfect

Harrycane now--so much so that I cannot write strait without blotting the paper as it will show for itself and you will excuse both writing & blotting--I called on Julia Marsh (Julia Fairchild) she sent much love to you 6 and thought she would call and see you next summer. Mr. Fairchild made me a present of a dosen pipes a thing very nessessary to us--I am sorry (I ain't sorry either) to tell you that I am now a regular smoker. it is a great comfort when travelling slow on the road.

St. Louis Friday April 13/49. Well I am in the great city of St. Louis. We arrived here yesterday about 3 o'clock and shall leave tomorrow night on the splendid boat Bay-state. I had a first rate trip down only we were on a miserable poor boat and the captain is a *villian*. He cheated me out of \$3.35 and the others in proportion it could not be helped without trouble so we gave it to him. "Experience bought is better than experience tought"

I think I am more the [than] that much wiser now. I saw P. L. Hall this morning--he is well but his wife is in very poor health. I shall call on Miss Holt this afternoon and write how she is tomorrow. There is a great rush for the upper Missouri river and I think we will find a large congregation at St. Jo. I have conversed with several who have been to California by land and they all tell me that there is not the least danger of feed being so scarce but what we can all go through safe *but if I find that there is danger I will never leave St. Jo. except to go home*. I saw *Gross* our Frenchman this morning--he is going back to France soon. I shall make all my purchases this after noon and have them on board. Oh the noise and din of a big city every street is crowded with busy men and teams all [each] intent on his own business taking care of No. 1. I suppose this is the largest town of its size in the world there is so much business doing of every description. I feel pened up here and want to get out on the road 7 where fresh air can be obtained more easily than here.

Mr Sutherland will not go up with us but will remain here a few days longer--Mother your calico shirt is the favorite of the whole Company--I have it on now at the biggest house in town 'The Virginia Hotell'--Mr. Sutherland is having one made just like it. Give my love to all who enquire after me--

Sarah--I shall never forget Eliab and all he has done for me the more I see him the more I love him and you-- Dear Friends Good night--I will write to morrow or next day & on the boat all the way up and at St. JO. in the meantime remember me as your Affectionate Brother. . . .

To J. C. Fairchild and Family St. Joseph April 23d 1849 I arrived here day before yesterday in good health All that are with me are well but Smith, [whom] we left at St. Louis sick but not very dangerous. We had a very pleasant trip from St. Louis being six days coming up. The town is full of people going to California but there is not the 20th part of as many as is reported you know we heard that there would be as many as 50,000 start from St. Jo alone there is not now more than 15 or 20 hundred and the great rush is over and the majority are here now of those who will start from here. At Council [Council] Bluffs there is not as many as there is here nor is there any more at Independence I know this from persons who have lately come from those places. I, and Mr Sutherland have talked with several old Mountaineers about the prospect of grass being short and they say that there is only one place where there is the least danger in the world and that is in the mountains where the valley is narrow and there is no danger of life to men nor beasts, the pass through the mountains not being so long as to prevent cattle going through on short feed therefore I think we shall go ahead if nothing should turn up to change our minds--

We have not heard from the waggon yet but suppose they are getting along well and will be here next week I shall be glad when they come because we left the tent in them and now have difficulty in finding places to stop

The first thing I did on arriving here was to find Alba Saxton and make myself known to him he appeared very glad to see me and has been very kind to me allowing me to put all of my freight in his store house and giving me the offer of his counter to sleep on--He is in the merchantile business and is doing a very large business now--He sends his best respects to all of you and to that dear little Ella I have passed through, and that safely, an attack of that great plague cholera. I had it on the boat near St. Louis but I checked it in time although I was alarmed some--There is none here it being very healthy. I thought of home when I was so sick I could hardly stir and how lonely it was to be among strangers and sick--I was wandering around among the camps when on looking

into a tent, out of curiosity, I saw E. D. Sawtell and Albert^{*} --I never was so much surprised in my life. He is going with mules and will not keep in company with us I 9 staid at his tent all day having bread and milk for dinner, bread which he baked too, and a good warm supper of Darwin's cooking very nice it was too he does not look so slick as he did when I saw him last but very well for a Californian he sends his respects to all of you. Albert also. I have not seen among all the waggons here any better fitted ones than ours nor a better lot of men puting myself among the rest and I think if any can go through we can and if I get out in the mountains and find it impossible to go through with cattle I shall pack my pony and walk behind him and *go through or bust*. I have found a company from Cleveland Ohio here but do not know any of them although they are acquainted with several that I am. The waggons from Waukesha are here I took dinner with Tro Ward to day so you see I am on the town eating with the man who invites me first and I think will have the best dinner My motto is first come first served--We shall get all the Wisconsin teams together and form a company to travell to gether I think there will be about 50 teams from there. This place is the scene of more drunken fights and gamboling and drinking than any other place on the frontier the streets are in commotion all of the time and it is best for sober men to keep back. I am glad on the whole that I started with cattle because I think they are the safest and not one half as much trouble. Mules are so stubern and will not do what is wanted of them and are more apt to stray off on the prairie while an ox will stay near where they are turned loose. Sawtell says that he is sorry that he did not take cattle. Many are selling their mules and buying cattle. I did not like when I first thought of starting to come down to an ox team but now I am perfectly 10 satisfied and only long to see the old team coming over yonder hill, then I shall feel at home to what I do now I saw Mrs. Hall in St. Louis she looks as pretty as ever but was in very poor health she requested me to tell you and the Brighams that she remembered you and loved you still. I also went to see Miss Holt she did not have anything to say & has grown *homly* as all of her relations. At Weston I saw a man by the name of B. C. Sewall who said he was acquainted with Mr. Dean [w]ho told me to say that he was coming to Madison in May and would call and tell you how I looked. Every where I go I find some one who has been acquainted with Father or Dean and on the strenth of it they treat me well--I was offered a situation by a young man here in a store if I would stop but "I put my fingers to my nose with a very knowing look" and refused, for now I think there is nothing to hinder us

from going through safe & sound but notwithstanding the prospect ahead there are some who are wanting to sell out for various reasons--some because they have not money to finish fitting out, some are sick of the journey, and some are home sick now if you should hear that I was selling out you may depend it is for the latter reason that is the only thing [which] would induce me to sell and I think I have as good reason to be homesick as any one for no one has left more at home than me yet I shall not sell out at present--although the dearest wish of my heart is to see home again. Every thing is very cheap here and a surplus of all things on hand. Flour & Bacon & in fact every thing but groceries are cheaper here than at St. Louis. I did not buy much there hearing that we could buy here cheaper and save freight up 11 the river. I wish we had not bot a stove at Madison because we can get some better and cheaper here we ought to have one with an oven to bake--but we will get along as there are several among the Wisconsin teams which we can use to bake in.

Some of their family friends.

You may think that, by coming by the river cabin passage and bring[ing] so much freight, I am pretty near out of money, but, thanks to Father's liberality, I shall have some left when we get started from here but not much about 15 or 20 dollars which will be all I shall need there being nothing to spend money for untill we reach California then I am in hopes that I shall dig or earn some if all turns out well. Tell Wilcox that those Boots I cannot ware (1 pair) they are so small one being larger than the other which I don't like *pretty well* --Sawtell is agoing to start for Fort Kearney^{*} day after tomorrow. Ox teams will start week after next if the weather is warm. We shall not go to Fort Kearney but take a strait walk for the gold diggings turning neither to the right or left keeping our eyes on the golden star of the Sacrimento [Sacramento]. While I was at Weston I was introduced to the Rev. Mr. Wright a connection of Mr. Lords he sends all of his love to them and invited me to his house but the boat being about to leave I could not go--he is doing well and in good health. When in St Louis at the Virginia Hotell I saw a very nice window latch which I will draw on a paper and send I don't know whether you will understand it or not. It is a pretty site to see the encampments around the town everybody in them in the highest Spirits singing and dancing cooking washing 12 clothes & taking care of the animals--There are cattle & Mules for sale here by the drove and cheaper than they can be bought South--

The old Fort Kearney, in the angle between the Missouri and Platte rivers.

Dear Friends I love you all more than ever and will write again and many times before I go from the white settlements and get beyond the reach of everybody and for the present good bye--

Give my love to all enquiring friends and remember me as your affectionate. . . .

To J. C. Fairchild and Family St. Josephs April 24th 1849 I wrote you a long letter day before yesterday which you have received before this, and I write to day not because I have any thing new or particularly interesting but, because it relieves me from low spirits to talk to you all, although I cannot [receive] an answer for months yet.

I heard from the teams in a very roundabout way and think they will be here the first of next week if they have had no bad luck. I long to see them and regret now that I consented to leave them. That old, long red waggon seems like home to me, that is, as much like home as any place out of Madison. I am in good health and gaining flesh every day and by the time I return I will be as fat as one can well wish I am now giving you my opinion on that subject. We have concluded on stoping at the Mormon City if we cannot get any farther this year with our teams we can live there very comfortable if nessessary to stop but I do not think but that we can go through safe and without more than

FORT LEAVENWORTH

13 ordinary difficulty--I heard from Mr. Brooks^{*} he is at Independence--the report about losing his team was false--Sawtell's teams travelled with him on their way here and did not say any thing Of his losing his mules. We may meet him on the road as we are now nearer than he and he may pass us I hope he will as I have a letter from [of] Porterfield's [to] give to him which is very *important*. Sawtell and Company have started for Fort Kearney, in company with an old Mountaineer named Goodhue,--they go seventy five miles out of their way to get there for what purpose I know not.

Darwin tells me that Steele^{*} is coming soon and going through with horses but will not bring his family. I am afraid he will never get through with horses, the old Mountaineers will not trust them for very light work--I was crazy when I thought of starting with them. I think cattle are the best and

most sure if they are not quite as fast. There will not be more than 3 or 4 weeks difference in the time of going which will not make much difference to us who are not in a hurry to get to the gold mines. There are some who are starting with high expectations--they expect to return in fifteen months with an independent fortune.

A. E. Brooks, of Madison, who, with two sons, made a "pile" in the space of a single year.

Elijah Steele, of Kenosha, who figures as Lucius' partner in the later letters. See especially letter of December 6, 1851. Steele was practicing law in Kenosha as early as June, 1848.

Their expectations *may* be fully realized but I am afraid not. A man from Independence who went to California last fall writes home that he is making with his family from \$500 to \$1000 per day. I saw a man who read the original letter and knows the man to be honest and can be relied on. There may be a chance for 14 your *humble servant* to fill his pockets, if so, Mother you shall have, as I promised you, half Then there shall be a 5 story brick on the corner if gold can build it but I will not raise my antispation[s] to high for fear they might hurt if they should fall--I will at least do my best--

Mr & Mrs Sutherland are well, they are boarding but a short distance from where I am. Mr Smith has arrived from St. Louis perfectly recovered from his illness--Claghorn & Rasdell are well. Gen H-- Oh! I can't spell the name but the count's father will be here soon we left him in St. Louis. He is going to C-- having left his wife for ever. He sold every thing and gave her half and is agoing to keep away from her. I met Capt Sullen, who used to clerk for Baxter & Hall, yesterday in the street he to, is on his way to C-- with mules. I have a very good boarding place considering the town is so full. The family consists of a man and an old nigger woman--Smith boards here to. Father, tell B. Stowell that he cheated us on them oxen.

A man from Milwaukee sells out to day having backed out, in this way outfits can be purchased very cheap. There will be a great many teams return by the time they get to Grand Island. I think that those who start from there will go through if possible. There is a very large company from Pittsburg and some hard cases among them. They fight and quarell continually some have seperated in anger. I should not like to belong to such a company and be compelled to travell with them. There is another company from Virginia who are dressed in uniform it is fun to see them breaking

mules being, most of them, clerks & machanics who never had any thing to do with animals they make awkward business of it and a good deal of sport for the by standers--Cash, Anse Olin is here from Waukiesha he will probably travell with us when we start for the plains. I find more teams from Illinois than any other state & they have the best teams mostly oxen some driving seven yoke to a waggon. We shall go up the river 10 miles to Savanah landing to cross the river it being a much better place and better road. Most of the Wisconsin teams are going to meet on the opposite [side] of the river and form a company, elect officers, & start. I have told you all the news I can find to day but will write again in a day or two--

Little Ella how is she--well I trust as I cannot hear for months from any of you but you can hear from me every few weeks as I can write from the Forts that will be a pleasure to me as well as you Good bye untill day after to morrow if the mails carry strait I remain your affectionate Friend. . . .

T. W. Sutherland to J. C. Fairchild St Joseph May 2d 49-- Cadwise has just come in He reports the wagons about 30 or 40 miles back they will be here to morrow or next day. So we will be off this week--The crowd that we feared is not here. The largest emigration leave this place--I think from what I can learn that St Joseph will have as many as Independence & Council Bluffs together. So we have no particular fears as far as mere numbers are concerned--There has been some sickness from Cholera though our boys are all well Lucius is as "Happy as a clam" & our only wish is that our wagons would come in that we might be off-- 16 How is it that as soon as I left you you have gone back to your old tricks not that I doubt that John deserved all he got--by the way I settled up with L-- & paid him in full but I cannot find the note that you signed with me. If he gave it to me as he should have done I must have mislaid it. L-- partner was in the store when I paid him. I presume that it is all right but his Grant Co friends who are here speak so doubtingly of L-- that it may be that he is dishonest as well as mean--

I promised you that I was not going to California to die on the road but the number being so much reduced from what we had expected, I think we can see our way clearly--I am writing this letter in Mr Saxton's store. He has been very civil to all of us. He is making himself a California fortune

without the trouble of going there after it. Business here is very good and prices low--lower than I have ever known them in Madison--

I wrote a line to Beriah which I suppose he received.* Give my pious regards to Mc-- Johnson, Beriah of course, old Bird, Gray and to all the rest that have within them "souls to be saved" Yours Truly. . . .

Beriah Brown, editor of the *Argus*, Democratic paper at Madison.

To J. C. Fairchild and Family St Joseph May 5th 1849 I have now been here two weeks and the teams are not here but they will be to night or tomorrow. Mr Cadwise is here his teams have gone to Counsil Bluffs and he came here to buy provisions. He passed our team & Walkers & Claghorns a week ago today 120 17 miles from here and with ordinary travelling they should be here to night. They had got seperated from Count [Haraszthy] and laid over one day and a half for him to overtake them but he did not and they are travelling alone. Mr. Cadwise is obliged to hire his freight hauled to the Bluffs with wagons, the boats not being able to go up, the water is so low which costs him considerable He is well I am geting most awfully tired of staying here with nothing to do and nothing to do it with I pass my time in reading writing & mending my clothes. The crowd is growing less very fast the teams are crossing the river and some are starting for the plains depending on grass for thier cattle but it is not hardly good enough for them and do much work they can live well and do nothing. We shall cross as soon as we can get ready and lay there untill the grass is good.

If I was obliged to stay here much longer I would back out and leave but I hope it will not be nessessary. One of our Wisconsin friends was in the woods the other day, with Mr. Rasdall, cutting timber for Ox bows, and Barker, his name, went back for his knife, which he had left on the ground, when two men came up to him and knocked him down jumped on his breast untill he was senseless then robbed him of 55 dollars--He lay some two hours before he was found. The men have not been found yet but the police are on [their] track. A more daring piece of Villiany I never heard of it being broad day light and not more than 1/4 mile from town Barker is getting better but he was hurt very bad.

There is a great many black hearted villians going and the game will be the one who shoots first is the best fellow. I will keep out of such company as there is a great many of the very best of men going and among 18 them there will be no more danger than at home. A man wont make day wages robbing me my pockets are too light. I am glad I shall have no money when I get started because I will not be troubled about it when I know it was taken from me honestly by the merchants of St. Jo. Every man goes armed me among the rest which is useless here. There are thieves enough to steal a man blind here they will steal any thing no matter how worthless to them. When I was in St. Louis I bought of Gross an india rubber cloak with a cap on it. It is a nice thing to keep the rain off and will keep my delicate self from catching cold.

There is living next door a french girl who sings my old favorite song "Good bye" which seems like home and sister Sarah.

A man from Watertown passed through town and told us that Father had been giving Elder Reed & my friend Jehu-hoo--what they have long been figuring for & that Reed had brought an action against him. I am glad you done so Father but sorry you had an occation to do it and think it will do them good. California will lose a very *valuable* man if Reed cannot come 1 am almost tempted to turn back if he is not coming.

I suppose by this time Gen. Ruggles is back from the city & soon Dean & Ruggles will be in full blast. Well I hope by the time I come back with a fortune they will be rich & I will retire with you Eliab from active life providing I make a fortune.

Claghorn, Rasdell, Smith & Mr Sutherland & lady are all perfectly well & the boys with the team were when Mr Cadwise left them a week ago. Tell John T. Wilson Ben is well & Ed

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None of the Mineral Point people are here yet but will be soon probably as they are with horses and started soon after we left that place. I shall probably see George Hickox. I am looking for Mr

Steele every day but he may not come I Should like very much to see hung and his family. It will be like parting from you all again when I leave this place for the wide Praries where no word can reach me of you and many is the time I will wish myself back by your sides and how will I miss my Dear Mother in sickness and in trouble and in happy times too, but one thing will cheer me on the hope of geting back when I shall have reached the Goal ahead California then and not till then will I turn back I may be foolish but something urges me onward and onward I shall go untill I get to the Pasific [Pacific] then to China then round the world home that is my route which I shall try to go if I cannot I will go as far as I can & then return

I will write from the Forts on the way and every other oppertunity I get to send letters to the states which will be often for the first few weeks as there will be many turn back in that time and prehaps I may be one if I am there will be some great misfortune happen to me if not I will keep on. There are many families going and I do not envy them their task going with children or wives they will see hard times and many will never see California--There are ten thousand Mormons at the Bluffs ready to start for the Great salt lake prehaps we can join them and stop with them.

The prospect is good for a wet season & there will be more grass than there was last year. I find by looking among the Camps that we are fited out as well if not better than most of them and have more provisions than 20 others and better. I shall take the stove out of the wagon and use it on the ground as we will not have any room to Spare when we get our load in and I think it will be more convenient to cook. I bought in St Louis 50 [pounds] of Paniola or Parched corn ground a very nice thing a man can live on it with no other provisions.

How is dear little Ella now *it* [is] five weeks older than when I last saw *it*, I should like to see her-- She will be going to school when I do. Well, dear Friends, it is getting late and I cannot write any more because I have told you everything I know of any interest--Cassius, Charlie, Sarah, Eliab-- Father & Mother all--Good Bye--and God bless you and remember your affectionate. . . .

Sunday morning--I finished the above last night early but about 11 o'clock Smith *brot* Sarah's & Cassius' letter and I got up and read it Cassius' was short and sweet but knew most of it before. I am

sorry that Bliss has married Miss Brigham but if they are satisfied I am for when I get out on the praries I shall never think of *them*.

Cash! I thank you for your good advice to return but it is my honest opinion that it is not nessessary and by going I run not much more risk than ordinary years with the exception of going through the Mountains and these by going very slow we can go through safe I tell you just as I think it is, both sides of the picture.

Cash, I like driving oxen better than clerking even if that old, big, Lounge is handy but, you must make some alowance, it being quite a novelty to me now, prehaps, when it gets to be another story I will envy you your lot in the store. I, at least, envy you in one thing 21 being among your best & only true friends--Mine also that is the only attraction Wisconsin has for me now but that alone is enough to bring me to it in a *few years*. Trow Ward and Anse Olin send thier respects to you. How is Dear Charlie--I love him very dearly and hope he will stick to his studies and not pattern after his older brothers. Charlie, go through College if you neglect it you will repent it all of your life as I have for not improving my oppertunities when younger. Eliab & Sarah & Ella--a little Dean family--Again all Good bye. . . .

I will write once or twice before I leave--

To His Sister St. Joseph May 11th 1849-- I recieved your kind letter last evening, the first I have recieved from any body, you may know how much good it done me. I got up in the night to read it then went to bed and dreamed of all of you the ballance of the night. I am very sorry to hear that you had not recovered your health but hope, ere this, you are perfectly well. You say you had not heard from me often. I had written three times before Bird started home and have written four times scince some of which you must have recieved and will eventually recieve them all. I was looking for those letters the other day and concluded I had lost them out of my trunk they may be at Independence, if so, I may possibly get them. I have just returned from the steamboat having put a letter on board to the P.M. of Independence to forward all letters to me. It is uncertain whether I ever get them if not I will let this nose of mine be a letter of recommendation 22 and I can pass in a

crowd. I can think of all you would say if you were able and feel myself more closely bound to you by you[r] kind and Christian like advice which I will try to follow with all my heart because I know you are competent to advice on any subject you have studied & because *I love you and Mother better than all else on earth*. I cannot tell you, words cannot express it, but I feel it, and hope you do too.

You & her have always been my best and dearest friends and although I have been mean and troublesom yet I have always loved you dearly as well as all the rest of the family. Eliab has been so kind to me that I can never repay it but I consider him one of my best friends and I know no one shall be a better friend to him than I if I live to see him again and I have no fears but that I shall. You have got some of my letters from here ere this, telling you that I had seen Alba Sax- ton he has been very kind to mc and done me various favors. I like him very much and think a [him] very nice looking too.

You say Elouise has been at Madison. I was treated very kindly by her and all of the family about the same as when we were there with her the old Lady was very familiar with me and I could see no difference from old times. I am not troubled about any thing only your being drawn in and mixed with the quarrell when you are inocent. It can't be helped and I am satisfied to let every thing go on as it will and mother to have her own way about my affairs I do not care what she does or says about me to the H's--nor for the consequences of her doing & sayings as far as it regards myself but to have her do you any injustice would make me regret that I ever had any connection with or acquaintance with 23 any of the family but I repeat do not be troubled on my account as I [am] perfectly indifferent to it.

Thad sent his love to her by me from Thomsons and made some very mean remark in connection with it-- but I gave it to her according to his orders as I would for anybody.

Good bye my sister, I am sorry to disappoint you[r] hopes in not coming home without going over the mountains but I think I shall go and get through if there is any way to do it

Good bye, I will write again soon. Your affectionate Brother. . . .

Don't show this to anybody-- Albe M S sends his respects in his own hand writing

To J. C. Fairchild and Family St. Joseph May 13th 1849--Monday noon I am writing you for the last time from the white settlements. The wagons arrived last Friday in good order and all of the boys were well the cattle looked fine and fat. We crossed the river at Savanah-landing day before yesterday and went out to the prarie 20 miles west of this place on the main road to California where we shall form a company and start as soon as possible. Yesterday I walked in from the camp (20 miles) before dinner, a good walk for a 'counter jumper,' to get some washers for our wagon We have bought a splendid yoke of Oxen for 70 dollars which makes our team strong enough for any mudhole.

You may prehaps think we are out of money after making so many purchases but Edwin had more than he told us he had and we shall have some 10 or 12 dollars 24 left when I get back--S's [Smith's] teams will be here to day and join us--

I have got to go to the Camp yet to day and cannot write any more now but there will be plenty of chances to send letters to the Post Office and I will write every few days. I have recieved but one letter from home here but I know there are some at Independence for me.

All of the company are well--and myself too--first rate--

Father, Mother, Eliab, Sarah, Ella, Cassius, & Charlie all Goodbye--Your true Friend. . . .

I have yet to walk 20 miles today which will account for this short letter

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Ten Miles West of Fort Childs--Saterday June 5th 1849 & Sunday. According to promise I take this oppertunity to write I am well and getting along first *rate* My health has been good all of the time scince St. Josephs. Edwin, Bengiman, Claghorn, Rasdall, Seaman, Walker, Smith & Eavens are all perfectly well and send their respects to all. I wish to write

you everything that I think you would like to hear and therefore will copy from my journal as far as nessessary. I wrote you from St. Jo. six times and recieved one letter from Sarah & Cassius. Mr Sutherland has left us and gone by the way of Santa Fe with Harazsthy and 3 teams from Delavan. He thought it the safest and most sure route although it is 3 months longer.* He may be right

NODAWAY MILL

25 but I do not think so. When I was in St. Jo. last I saw him and he said he would come out to our camp and see us and talk over the matter about the route but he did not come. I left [word] in town for him to bring out to the camp a box of soap a new iron tea kettle and tar Bucket but he not coming as he promised we have lost them, but we have bought a box of soap of a man who backed out and a teakettle of a man to day so that we can get along well enough. I have not seen Haraszthy since I left Wisconsin he not arriving at St. Jo. untill we had left but learn that he got through well and family in good health. (Journal The teams arrived at St. Jo. May 10th staid there two nights & crossed at Savanah Ferry on the 12th travelled 30 miles into the country and laid over two day[s] for Thos. Sutherland but he sending word that he was not coming we started on I am sorry he has parted with us but it cannot be helped now as he is on his way to Santa [Fé] The roads are splendid as hard as plank. There is a mission 28 miles west of St. Jo. where we stoped an hour. Yesterday (14th) we met two Indians one a Sack and the other a Fox both chiefs with a paper from the Indian Agent saying that the Indians complained of the emigrants burning their timber and requested all to pay them something so we gave them a half dollar which satisfied them. The country resembles Wisconsin being rolling Prarie but there is but very little wood and that is in the ravines and we are obliged to carry wood and water all of the time as we do not camp near them all times. We have formed a company and elected John Waters of Platteville Captain, a first rate man. The company consists of the Capt. Parsons, Booker, Riley, Hoag & Wife of Platteville, Eavens of Milwaukee, Seaman, 26 Eavens, Claghorn, Rasdell, Stillman, Walker, Smith, Beng Wilson, Edwin George, & myself of Madison, two brothers from Beetown Wis. named Phelps. Major Monroe Col. Peters and company of St. Louis one wagon from Iowa one from Ill. two from Mineral Point Wis. and others we shall probably take in more. It rained very hard this morning (19th) but did not make the roads very bad. Yesterday Rasdell & Parsons found a very fine horse which seemed

to have been deserted in consequence of a very bad wound in the breast. (20th noon) It has been raining hard all the morning which will make the roads very bad accompanied by some of the noted thunder & lightning louder than I ever heard it before Ben has been complaining of not being very well but I guess it [is] not very serious as he sits behind me singing "Oh! carry me back to Old Virginia" to himself. (21st) This morning 20 minutes past 2 o'clock one of our company died of the Billous fever, named P. Font from Iowa Van Buren Co. he had been sick several days and was very imprudent. Crossed the Nimihoe [Nemaha] river this morning 10 o'clock & crossed Little Blue at 3 o'clock P.M. The horse which Rasdell found was called for this evening by the owner having strayed away 23d crossed the Virmilion [Vermilion] river at 12 o'clock. it is a branch of Big Blue. It was so deep that we were obliged to block up our wagon boxes to keep the provisions dry. 24th Another of our company died at 12 o'clock of the Cholera he belonged to Monroes mess and was at the point of death when they joined our company we buried him while nooning I will give you a description of our daly life which is pretty much the same all of the time. We are wake[d] at 1/2 past 3 in the 27 morning to untie the cattle to feed then make a fire and cook breakfast as soon as possible. we have fried meat coffee and bread as soon as that is over the order is given to bring up the cattle who by this time have filled themselves & laid down Yoke up and start out each one leading in his turn and then going to the last end of the train and work up to the head travell until 12 1/2 o'clock and noon an hour make our dinner of cold pan cakes cook[ed] the night before then smoke and start & go on till 4 o'clock then camp whether we are near water and timber or not as we have both in the wagon all of the time, by the time we get supper out of the way and cooking done for the next day it is time to go and herd the cattle and let them eat untill they all lay down then tie them in the ring. By the time this is all done we are tired enough to go directly to bed so that we do not have much time to mend clothes or loaf about reading, * Still in doing all this we enjoy ourselves first rate. Ed is chief cook in our mess. Our provision[s] are all in good order and we have more than a year's stock on hand I think. The cattle look fine and are fattening every day as the grass is good and plenty of it. Our wagon is in good order and will stand us through, I am sure, although we have a heavy load about 28 hundred We have as good a team and outfit throughout as I have seen on the road & if any one can go through we can. We bought a very nice yoke of cattle at St. Jo. for \$70 and after paying for all of these things we have nearly \$20 left to begin the

world with when we get to our journies end. The cattle and horses are tied every night to pickets and a guard around them. It is not 28 unpleasant standing guard when it is not rainy nor is it then very bad, it comes my turn once a week and rain or no rain I am obliged to turn out. Once in a while we have something a little extra in the eating line such as bean soup, Apple Sauce, Boiled Rice and *things*. Claghorn & Rasdell have a yoke of cows and give us all the milk we can use and it is very good when we cannot get wood we can eat bread & milk. We passed Fort Childs day before yesterday. I went over and took a look at it. All the houses are built of mud one story high.

Col Bonewell [Bonneville]^{*} is in command we had intended to stop near there but wood & water were so far off that we moved on to this place yesterday morning and will stop untill tomorrow morning. We have all our provisions out airing and riging up our wagon cooking beans baking bread in fact a general rig up for traveling to Fort Laramie. We cooked our supper & Breakfast day before yesterday with Buffalo Chips not having any wood, they burn first rate--Yesterday 3 trains of Mounted Riflemen bound for Oregon passed and all camped in sight of us one within 3 rods, They have gone on. One of the solgers gave Smith an old mule that could not keep up. After we were out 4 days I sent back by a wagon master in the army to the Post Office but he did not get anything for me. Claghorn's company & us bought cloth for a tent at St. Jo. and made it ourselves I am writing in it now sitting on the ground. The pony is fine and is of great use to the company herding cattle & looking up camping grounds. Sutherland took him from 29 the wagon before they reached St. Jo. to look for the Count he was gone a week and brought pony back very poor and his back all raw.

A good summary of the difficulty presented by that route is contained in *A Quaker Forty-Niner, Adventures of Charles Pancoast* (Philadelphia, 1930). Especially chapters xiii-xviii.

Cf. Jesse Applegate, "A Day with the Cow Column," in J. Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest* (New York, 1918), 149-154.

This was the famous Captain B. L. E. Bonneville whose *Adventures* were written by Washington Irving. Sketch in *Dictionary of American Biography*. Fort Childs is the historic Fort Kearney.

Ben drives most of the time as I am not good enough to drive where the road are bad I drive on good roads--I cannot realize that I am 300 miles from the white country. It does not seem to me that I am on so long a journey and comes as natural as life to move on every day & live out doors. I have not yet seen any hard times to scare me back although the most fright- full stories were told

us of the country we have passed over and the same kind are told of the country ahead. The stories are told by Californians who have backed out and wish some excuse to give. They are all lies. There was some Cholera among the Emigrants just after they left St. Jo. but it disappears soon.* It is all brought from the Missouri River. We hardly ever see a grave now--The prospect ahead is good and I have not the least doubt in the world but that we shall get through if we live. As to the Indians they are peaceable and we have not seen but 3 scince we left St. Jo. We are most through the Pawnee country who are the worst Indians we have to pass through. The road runs along the Platt[e] river to Larimee but there is no wood on the barks but on the islands we can get some--

For his family's peace of mind, he was minimizing the cholera danger. It stayed with the companies in 1849 to the upper crossing of Platte River, above Fort Laramie.

I trust you are all well and enjoying your peacfull home which is the greatest pleasure I have. I can see you all as well as though I was with you and I look with all my *minds eye*. Show this letter to J. T. Wilson & David Dixson as it [is] just what Beng would write if 30 he had time but he is very busy all of the time. Give our respects to all enquiring friends. Little Ella too. I have not time to write more as I have to pack the wagon before night. I will write again soon. I do not know when I shall get an oppertunity to send this to the Post Office & probably by the time you get this we shall be beyond the mountains & near to the Sacrimento if we have good luck.

I remember you all of the time and never for a moment arc you out of my mind all in a groupe and I remain Your Affectionate & true Friend. . . .

[Transcript from diary] We left Fort Childs [Kearney] June 3d where we stoped 2 days to air our provisions and arrang our wagons. The river on each side is lined with high rugged bluffs, the view from the summits of which was splendid, the roads dotted with wagons with here & there a party of horsemen. Crossed the South fork of Platte river June 9th--The ford is good but great care must be taken as there are holes where a wagon will go to the bed. The road on the South bottom is bad. On the 10th we had the first Buffalo meat which was very acceptable after living on Salt pork so long. Crossed from the South Fork to the North on the 11th. The roads along the North Fork are very sandy in places. Passed through Ash Hollow on the 13th & Court House rock the 15th which

I could imagine looked just like the Capitol at Madison. Passed the famous Chimney rock on the 18th We could see it nearly fifty miles distance. I climbed up as far as ever any body did and took a view of the country which was truly splendid all around the bottom was

TRAIL PASSING A PRAIRIE FARM

31 covered with camps among which was *Uncle Sams* trains.* The Bluffs in this region bear a very close resemblance to old walled ruined cities, with walls, terraces & gardens, as plain as life. On the 20th from *Look out Peak* near Scotts Bluffs we saw for the first time the nearest peaks of the Rocky Mountains. Saw the first house, on this date, since we left Fort Childs--a BlackSmith shop, store, and dwelling belonging to Rubudu [Robidoux] a French trader of St. Jo. Arrived at Fort Larimee June 22d and camp one mile West. The U. S. train has been near us ever since they struck this road and always in the way, in fact they were the most perfect nuisance on the whole road. I believe they wanted the protection of the Wis. star Co.

The Mounted Rifles, Colonel William Wing Loring commanding, on their way to Oregon.

Fort Larimee is built of mud & stone in the form of a Hollow square, Crossed the North Fork of the Platt on the 30th & 31st in our wagon boxes. Feed in this section was very poor. On the *Glorious Fourth* we travelled all day not being able to find any grass to stop on I was aroused by *Jake*--a driver in the company--on the morning of the 4th yelling "Hurrah for Hail Columbia" & firing his pistols & musket. Encamped at Mineral Lake--that night--on a small pond of water tinctured very strongly with alkali, There is a great deal of this water in this region which is sure death to stock of all kinds--Encamped on the 8 & 9th of July on the Sweet water having merry times over a dinner of "Duff" "Sailors Apple Dumpling" & a big loaf of pound cake--given to Rasdall in Madison passed Independence Rock on the 10th also Devils Gate--here we stumbled on to Dan. Ross of Dane Co. 32 Entered the South Pass on the 11th of July & camped about the center where one of our cattle died. Passed Pacific Springs 17th here we were obliged to throw away everything not actually necessary to take and cut our wagon down in consequence of losing our cattle. Camped on Little Sandy on the 19th and crossed the desert between Little Sandy and Green river that night carrying

watter for our cattle and feeding them Meal & Flour. distance 52 miles. called Subletts [Sublette's] cut-off by Weir crossed the Green river at the Mormon ferry \$3 a team

Here I was taken with the Mountain Fever, while 5 miles from camp herding cattle, and lay nearly 2 weeks in the wagon being dragged over a most awful rough road but by the help of a good Doctor, belonging to the Co. and Bens & Ed's kind nursing I overcame the disease and was restored to health. Here, also, Smith of Madison and Phelps of Beetown made a roadometer which they attached to S's wagon. Struck Bear river July 24th--Snake Indians--camped on the 30th near Steam Boat & Soda Springs. Aug 1st left Bear river and took Lee's [Myer's or Hudspeth's] cut-off leaving Fort Hall on our right Aug 3d not being satisfied with the manner of Capt. Waters' travelling all of the Madison boys left him and travelled with 2 teams from Mo. & one from Iowa. All respected Capt W. much as a man but did not like him as a capt of a Co. Ross joined us. The road through Lee's cut-off is hilly but otherwise good. Some hills were miles long. By the way we named our Co. the "IOOF Co." A.M.A. capt O.E.O. Lieut. Camped on Raft river the 8th near the Fort Hall road which joins the cut off. Arrived at Goose creek Aug 10th and left the morning of the 13th 33 Passed through warm spring valley 16th The water here boils & the boys say that "Hell ain't more than a mile from that place."--I believe it--Camped on St. Mary's spring the head waters of the Humbol[d]t river 16th--passed through a very rough "canon" and camped on the main river the 17th--Grass is good at this point--roads levell but very dusty, the soil resembles ashes The Humbolt river abounds in Speckled Trout some of which I caught--Provisions at this point began to get scarce so much had been thrown away-- The Indians commit Some deppredations stealing & killing cattle. Some were killed not more than 300 rods from our herd one night & ours would have suffered if several men were not with them. Passed the Great Northern [Greenhorn's] Cut-off Sept. 3d or rather *cut-on* being 200 miles farther--Many trains went this road to thier sorrow as feed is scarce and roads very bad.* Arrived at Grand Marsh 20 miles from the Sink, Sept. 5th at which place we stayed 2 day[s] cutting hay to feed the stock over the desert between the sink & Truckee's river. Arrived at the sink at 2 o'clock A.M. of the 8th Sept. and lay near the Sulphur springs untill evening when we commenced our journey over the great desert sending a party ahead to cool the watter at the Hot springs dis[tance] 28 miles--we arrived there a little after sun rise The cattle were very much

fatigued. The Hot spring is very large and as hot as water can be made easily, I saw a large ham boiled in 17 1/2 minutes perfectly well done. Here we lay over all day and started for Truckee river at dark. \bout Sunrise the next morn. we got within 8 miles of Truckee river, where the road begins to be very sandy, 34 and made out to get within 6 miles of the river but the cattle were so much worn out by long hard drives with but little feed that they could go no farther therefore we left the wagons and drove the cattle to the river loose, then we were obliged to drive them 5 miles down the river from the road to grass The next day we went back after the wagons and got through safe. The road from the sink to Truckee's river was lined with dead cattle, horses & mules with piles of provisions burned & whole wagons left for want of cattle to pull them through We were very thankful to get through safely. That desert is truly the great Elephant of the route and God knows I never want to see it again. Started up the Truckee river crossing it 27 times some of the crossings are very bad and some good. Grass all gone except in one valley. From the first to the last crossing distance 48 miles. Arrived at Dog springs 5 miles from the last crossing 19th Sept.--Passed through Oval valley on the 20th Sept. This is on the second ascent of the serra's [Sierras] Arrived at Canabal [Cannibal] Camp 21st^{*} Passed up on to the last summit of the mountains on the after noon of the 22d and camped on the head waters of the Ubah [Yuba] river next day--The roads from the summit to Johnsons is awfull and one would swear that a wagon could not be driven over and God only knows how we did get through--but we did and arrived in safety at Sacramento City October 10th--Such is a very brief account of our journey dear Friends--I could write a dosen quires but will tell you all when I return home. . . .

Cf. A. Delano, *Life on the Plains*, etc. Especially chapters xi-xii.
Cannibal Camp, where the Donner party in 1846 perished miserably.

35

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Sacramento City October 13th 1849 I am happy to be able to date my letter from the above place, & inform you that I am here safe and in good health. George & Wilson are also well. We arrived here last Monday morning & had I done as I sincerely wished to, I should have written you then, but, I have been very busy, taking care of & hunting our cattle, which if we lost would leave us without means of buying winters provision, to carry with us to the mines. I cannot in this letter give you a history of our journey suffice it to say, that we had as pleasant [a]

trip as the majority of emigrants accompanied with some very hard times, and some misfortunes. Our misfortunes was that of loseing cattle, the first "Old Bally," one purchased Of Butler Stowell, died on the Sweet Water where we cut our wagon box off and threw away most of our provisions, then in the South Pass another died, and one was taken lame with the "foot evil," which left us only two whole yoke, with a heavy load and a heavy wagon but by the kindness of the company, we were not obliged to throw away any more. On Truckee river another died, but by the kindness of Major Monroe, who gave us an ox, we have got through in good style. The great dessert from the sink to Truckee's river was an awfull place. The water at the warm springs in the center was poisenous to all kinds of stock, and the road, on the dessert, was lined with dead cattle, mules & horses with here and there a wagon, & all kinds of property in large quantities thrown away. We left no cattle there, but several gave out and laid down when within about six miles of Truckee, & we were obliged 36 to leave our wagons and drive the cattle to water loose, leaving the boys without water either to drink or cook with, untill we could carry it to them. The next day we got the wagons to the river, where we staid 4 days, our cattle being unable to go on without recruiting. The road from and up the Truckee river, to the summit of the S[i]erra Navada [Nevada], was bad, but the road from the Summit to Johnsons settlement is the most *damniabl* road on the face of the earth. You must excuse such an expression but if you only knew of and could have seen the hard labor we have expended on it, you would all say so. It was filled with large rocks, from the size of a teakettle up to that of a hogshhead, over which we were obliged to drive, or rather lift the wagons. It is certainly the most miserable, gloomy road on earth but we are now over safe and with no bad luck ourselves, but on the second days drive from Summit, Rasdalls & Claghorns wagon broke down both fore wheels, and they were obliged to leave it, but they having three good yokes of cattle, we took one and two other wagons taking the others and loads in proportion they were not obliged to throw away anything of any value. They, with a young man named McKensey packed through from Bear valley, that is, they walked and packed provisions on their. backs; they arrived here a week before us. Smith & Walker came through with us to Truckee's river and there, their cattle being in better order than ours, they pushed on and stoped on Bear river with Dan. Ross & Stuart from Dane Co. to Mine, there being pretty good diggings there. I with Vie Seaman stoped there two days, to

see what they were doing, and over took the teams 7 miles the other side of Johnsons, packing our provisions on my pony. I think the miners there

STEADYING WAGONS DOWN A PRECIPICE

37 were averaging about five dollars a day which is very small wages here. The Bager boys from Milwaukie are there, but will leave soon. The first day I was in town (our camp is about 3 miles out) I found Darwin Sawtell lieing sick he has been here scince the last of July as you will have heared from Albert S-- who returned home sick in the last steamer, D-- has been speculating and has done well made some 10 or 12000 dollars. I was glad to see him but could not talk to him as much as I wished to although he is improving fast. I also saw Tro. Ward^{*} who had been mining but is now teaming with an ox team which is good business. Also Cadwise who is clerking for his board; he got here with three broken down horses & ten dollars in money out of his out fit which cost him 2500, George Hicocks is here camped near us having got through safe, he is well and sends his respects to you.

Trowbridge Ward of Waukesha.

We are going to winter on *Stanish Slow* [Stanislaus River] 100 miles south--Cadwise is going there too. Claghorn, Rasdall, Vic Seaman, George, Wilson, & Fairchild will form a company. Major Monroe & Mr Peters, with their men will go with us and we shall probably build a cabin together. It is our intention to build a good, comfortable log house on the best digings we can find South. It will be much more pleasant to winter South, than on any of the Northern streams, & from what we can learn, the mines on the Slow [Stanislaus] are very productive. We shall buy and take with us provisions enough to last us through the rainy season by selling what oxen we do not need and my horse we will have money sufficient to buy all we need. Beef is worth \$15 per Bbl, Pork \$40--Dried fruit \$1 38 per lb and every thing in proportion. Every thing is sold at the most extravagant prices, & labor is high to compare with it. Money is counted by the ounce, generaly. The stories we heard in regard to the richness of the mines were very much exagerated, still they are very rich & a man by hard work and great preseverence can make a fortune in a few years. Some make large fortunes in a few days but on the other hand some do not hardly pay their board. You can rely on my being satisfied with a small pile as I am very anctious to return home, & when there I will be perfectly

contented and I advise all of my friends, & everybody, if they have food & clothes in the States never to come to this country, but be satisfied where they are, but above all, never come the land route *for God's sake*. Still, notwithstanding I say this, I do not regret that I took the trip; no, I would not take \$10,000 for what I have learned, It has added years to my life, in my opinion. It is the journey to learn human nature, a man shows just what he is at heart, every feeling, every passion, is brought into action. I know those with whom I have travelled by heart,--their inmost feelings--& they know me as well, for I have shown what I am at heart--Would to God I knew myself as well--I am told that I have grown very much but I cannot vouch for the truth of it *as I have no looking glass*. I have one great treasure, thanks to the brotherly kindness of Eliab, in my books, which will be a great comfort in our cabin. I have more clothes than I wish I had, but they will work in before next season We shall try to live in comfort, such as will insure us good health, and then try to make money as fast as hard work can do it.

39

Henry Abby is working up on the head waters of the Sacramento, so Sawtell tells me, I fear he as well as many others, will be disappointed in their expectations of making large fortunes in a few day[s]. A. E. Brooks with his sons, Porterfield & Calmaugh have been here some time. Brooks, sons & C-- are mining on the American Fork & keeping grocery Porter- field is driving an express between San Francisco & this place at \$300 per month & board. I have not recieved any letters from home as I suppose you directed them [to] San Francisco & it is impossible to get them forwarded here in less than three weeks. I will recieve them while in the mines & will not be able to get an answer to the post office untill after the rainy season is over as the country is flooded so that it is impossible to get from one point to another. I will write you all I can untill that time

3 days later--We have sold every thing we had to spare, and bought all of our provisions, and have a pocket full of money left shall start for the South in the morning and I hope, as Ben & Ed do, that the next letter we date from this place will be to inform you of starting home which, if we have ordinary luck will not be many months Neither Ben or Ed have had a moment's time to write from here but will write to all their friends before the rain commences, & I have written all they would at present so you can show this to them with their love This town is built mostly of canvass,

a collection of tents, frames covered with cloth, with a few wooden & zink houses & every house almost has some kind of gambling going on in it money is plenty for everybody has a pocket full of it.

40

How does little Ella get along I hope well I should like to see her, Father & Mother too, Cassius, Charlie, Eliab & Sarah all I should like to see you now Give our, that is Ben's Ed's & mine, love to all who enquire after us as we love & respect all who will. We have left our best clothes, packed in two trunks, in store here, as we do not want them with us, I must now close as it [is] almost morning and with you all upper most in my mind I will always remain your son & Brother. . . .

--Uncle too--I forgot that--

Sawtell sends his love to all. Tell Dan Ross's friends that he is safe & well

Claghorn says, "tell them, I am here with head up to the wind."

A specimen of the first "*Dust*" I have got, which I washed out with a tin pan on Bear river. I hope to have a heap more such soon.

You will find the *gold Dust* in the wax.

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Big Bar on the Cosumnes river Nov 17th 1849 I embrace the first opportunity of sending my letter to the city P.M. to write you. I wrote you from Sacramento, but fearing my letter will not reach its destination, I shall reiterate some that was in it. We arrived at the City Oct 11th, [10th] in good health and spirits, thanking providence for our safe arrival & staid there a week Then, as I wrote you in my former, we started for the Stanislaus river, but our cattle being very much worn down by the trip over the Mountains, gave out before we got over 25 miles on our way, so we were obliged to stop at Dalor's [Dolores?] Rancho to let our cattle rest, & to improve the time nine of us started prospecting on foot with packs on our backs, & two horses packed, My pony & Monroes horse. We got to this place, distance 20 miles, & concluded to get

the wagons up here & try it, giving up going any farther South from nessessity, & I think it is just as well for us, for we can make common wages here, and it is a good place to winter, as there is no stream between us and the city, to hinder getting there any time, in case of sickness, or want of anything. Claghorn, Rasdall, & Seaman, are with us, in company with Mr. R. Peters, a gentleman from St. Louis, taking the trip for his health, & his friend Major Monroe, from Cal[.]away Co. Mo. We have not done much, as yet, towards making our fortunes, as we have not worked much on account of rainy weather. The first 3 days we made Forty dollars. Then Mr. Peters bought a large Quick-silver machine, which, Claghorn, Seaman, George, Wilson, Sewell & myself, took to work and fooled away a week experimenting on it, but it not being made right, it would not pay over 4 dollars a day a piece which will hardly pay expenses in this country, so we gave it up day before yesterday and took to our cradles

Sarah, I will let you & Eliab show the rest how we was[h] *gold*, I suppose You have a cradle for little *Ella*, have'nt you? Well, you have E-- dress just as the dirtiest laboring [man] you can see in the street, and set on a big Sat stone by the cradle, then lay Ella in, and immagine its head to be a sheetiron with round holes punched in, then you set a tub of water at his right hand, for the river, and a pile of dirt near, (full of *gold* of course) then Eliab put two shuvells full 42 on the riddle, & shake with the left hand, a shorte quick rock, poreing on water all of the time, and if the yellow stuff don't fly out of the tail of your cradle I'm no miner That is the best idea I can give you of our work, it is very simple, but pretty hard work. Much harder than standing behind the counter showing rags to the ladies of Madison, but still I like it much better Our time passes very pleasantly, with a joke & a song from cradle to cradle, with now & then a rush to see some good sized piece found in the dirt. I think we are in as poor diggings as there are in the country, but we are here, and I do not think we shall be able to get away, untill after the rainy season is over, so we shall do the best we can, & be content. *Ed, Ben, & I* work one cradle Yesterday we made 10 dollars apiece, & to day a little more, and I think we can make from 5 to 12 \$ a day, here all winter, which will give us money enough to buy a good quick-silver washer next spring, *Then for \$50 a day sure*. Ben was told of some diggings privately, by a man who has been there, and is going again, where the gold is very plenty and course, and has promised to meet him soon and tell him more. This man saw the hole

(and gold too--& the man who dug it digging it) out of which a man had taken \$30,000 he has now gone to the states with the money, intending to return in the spring. I think it all true, as Ben done the man a great favor, besides he is a man of good standing, & wealth, but we will know after Ben sees him again. if we are not decieved, we will make tracks for those diggings early in the spring and if luck is on our side, make tracks for home soon after.

To tell the truth, I am surprised at the quantity of gold in the country and I have seen only two of the OLD FORT KEARNEY (now Nebraska City)

43 poorest streams yet. Dig a hole most anywhere and you will find gold but not enough to pay prehaps at the present time.

We have for a house at present, one made entirly of willows thatched, which is very comfortable, but as soon as we get our winters Flour here from the City we shall build one of logs. Vic. Seaman has killed Black- tailed deer. enough for the whole camp, Sundays, and I hope will kill one or two tomorrow, they are very plenty, all around us, coming directly by the house often, so you may know we live well.

I tried to sell my Pony at the city, thinking that I should want the money to buy my share of the provision[s], and put him up a[t] auction twice once no one bid, and once a man bid \$28 only, so I bid him in, and rode him up here, turned him out in the hills, & did not look to see him for 3 weeks, when he came home, & I sold him to Major Monroe for \$40, not having any more use for him.

The little fellow was very poor, and nearly broken down, but he has done me many a good turn on the road, I loved him, he was so kind and gentle, always staying near when turned out loose, & lazy as hard riding & poor feed could make him I start for the city day after tomorrow, if it does not rain, for a load of provisions, and when we get them here, I don't care how quick, nor how hard it rains. I have heared of most of the Wisconsin people. The most of the Wis. Star Co. are at Weaver creek, 20 miles dis[tant]. Tro Ward told me he was going there to open a grocery. H. Abby is digging on the Trinity river. I saw Olliver Scovell, of Cleveland when I was in the city, flat broke, & then trying to get a situation, as *boss cook & table waiter*, at 44 the City Hotell. Every body is on

equal grounds in this country because every body has plenty of money and when they get out go to the mines & get more. Brooks & Sons are on the American Fork. Porterfield is driving an express from San Francisco & doing well. I saw Sawtell in town very unwell, he has not mined any yet, but thought he should go to Weaver, and try it this month, if he was able. He has made a small fortune, speculating, enough to go home with. Albert has gone home sick. Smith & Walker, with Dan Ross & Stuart, are about 12 miles from here in the hills, digging.

I suppose you are in the new house, and got it well warmed by this time, and got the grounds fixed up some I did not see from *St. Joseph* here a house that I liked better. I have not recieved any letters from home yet, but hope to find several at the city when I get there. I want very much to hear from you, and much more to see you all. I do not think I shall stay here more than a year, at the outside. and if I do well not as long, & if I take a notion to go home, I shall go, riches or no riches, but I think I had better wait untill I get a *pile* to bring with me, a small one, say enough to build that corner building, spoken of in old times, and if I make up my mind to that, I will bring enough to build a *smasher*, if sickness prevents me not.

I promised to write many in Madison, and will when I can, but I cannot at present find time because I am tired enough to go to bed directly after supper, after working all day, & when it rains the camp is so noisy, that it is impossible for me to write any thing you can show this to all you think would like to hear from me, (say *Mother Morrison for instance*) and give them all my love. Tell George Paine I will write him 45 soon, Ed. is writing to him now. Tell Ben's friends that he is well, & all of the Madison boys, I would advise all who are situated well at home not to come to this country although money can be made it will not pay a man for the trip by land. Never come by land, it is such a long, tiresome trip, and those who came by water, say the same--I wrote you from Fort Childs, & Ed wrote from Fort Larimee, where I ought to [have] written from, but I got wet in crossing the river, my saddle girth broke, and let me off the wrong end of my horse over my head

It is very late and I must close this but will write again soon.

Last Tuesday was election day in this state. The poles were open at our house. I like the constitution well--no Banks no Slavery & Married women rights. *Hurrah for this state* if the constitution is adopted. Sutherland ought to be here to figure to his advantage. The only law now in force in the mines is *hanging for Stealing*, and several have payed the penalty of that law. There is a small town about 12 miles from here called *Hangtown* from the number who have been hung there for stealing. While we were in town we were awakened in the night by the startling cry of murder, murder, but could see nothing in the morning we learned that one negro had robbed a colored gentleman while sleeping with him. I have understood scince that the negro was strung up for the offence.

Direct letters to Sacramento City,--& *write everything in town*, & I will remain your Affectionate Friend till death, . . .

P.S. Sunday Eve. 18th--Vic Seaman has just come with a big Buck's head on his back and I must off to help bring it in.

46

To J. C. Fairchild and Family River Cosumnes California Dec. 8/49 I am improving every oppertunity of sending letters to the office, in writing you, although I have nothing new to write, but I fear that unless I write often you will recieve nothing from me, as the mails are very uncertain. I have written you once from this place, and once while I was at Sacramento City, both of which, with this, I hope you will recieve, in due course of mail. My health is good, as it has been, with but few interruptions, scince leaving home. I was at the city a week ago, and expected to recieve letters from you, but was disappointed, although, I had previously sent an order to the P.M. at San Francisco, to forward all packages, directed to me to Sacramento. He refuses, unless the postage is prepaid, therefore I shall recieve none of your first letters, unless I meet an oppertunity of sending to San Francisco, by some person going, and probably [there will be] none untill next spring, so I must content myself with writing you often, and trusting that all is going well at home. I was gone nine days on the trip to town & back, for a load of provisions, the roads being very bad on our return. I found that Sawtell had been gone over a week, on his road home. I wish I was in the same *fix*, with a pile in my pocket. Scince my return from the city, we have built a good comfortable log

cabin, shed roof, covered with Willows, over which is a thick coat of mud, we occupy one end, and Peters' mess the other; our chimney is in the corner, and large and comfortable fire place, with bunks, one above the other, around the walls, with white curtains in front, ain't that nice? better, or as good, as the richest in the 47 country have, which is all we ask, and better than we ought to expect it is *dobed* [daubed] with *gold dirt*.

You cannot imagine the comfort we take with a good house, and fire place, after being deprived of them, and sleeping on the ground, for over seven months, eating, sleeping, cooking and setting on the ground in all weather it has become almost second nature to squat down on the ground, but every body here is just so, and it makes no difference, but I would look rather awkward setting on the side walk talking to my friends.

Ben is getting a[s] fat as a fool, and Ed a good deal fatter both have good health, as well [as] Claghorn, Rasdall & Seaman. Ben has been gone over a week, in search of those diggings, of which I spoke in my last, if he succeeds in his operation as well as I hope he will, we will all three be home next fall, with a little pile of dust. Ed. and I are working the cradle, and making a little something, but not much what is good wages for the states, will not pay board here, it costs us about one dollar and a half a day to live, I think. Provisions were very high, when we last bought. Flour was \$40 per Barrell, sugar from \$20 to \$40 a hundred, Molassess \$! .50 per gall. by the Bbl. & other articles in proportion. All kinds of merchandise rise & fall every few days they vary very much with the weather, in fair weather when teams can travell to & from the mines, they raise, in foul weather the other way. Many fortunes are made, in the city, on the rise and fall of provisions, and if Father or Eliab was here, with a small capital, they could soon make a fortune trading, but I would advise no one to come here, if they can earn a comfortable livelihood at home & I know both of you can. Money is to be made at any business 48 here, from cutting wood up, and money is made at mining, but not where we are now, but we hope to get in better diggings next spring. Not much can be made in the winter, after the rains commence. It has been clear weather for sometime, the nights and mornings are very cold, with heavy frosts, which makes it very unpleasant working in

the water mornings. The rains commence about Christmas, and end sometime in February, then the plains are overflowed by the melting of the snow on the Mountains.

On our return, one of our best oxen mired down and we were obliged to leave him, after his pulling us faithfully from Madison here. We have now only 3 steers, to pull us around the mines next spring, and I think I will travell with a pack on my back, rather than have anything to do with an ox team. I am thoroughly sick of them, and will never swing an ox whip over a team again if I can help it. Vic. Seaman kills a deer every Sunday, last Sunday he killed two, we live like princes, on deer meat and bread. I have not tasted vegetables of any kind, or butter, scince leaving the states, and do not expect to, for some time to come. Christmas is near at hand, and I have not concluded in what manner it is best to celebrate it we have a little of that Brandy which we took from the store, which will help the boys feel happy, but, as I do not use the weed, it will do no good. I think we will have *Apple Dumplings*, for Christmas dinner, which will stand no show with your roast Turkeys & Pigs.

One days travell, in Lee's cut-off, near Bear river, six teams, ours among the rest, left the Wisconsin Star Co., Capt. Waters of Plattville, not being satisfied with his manner of travelling, and formed a company,

A PAWNEE VILLAGE

49 under the glorius name of *IOOF Co.* and were known to all other trains by that name. There was nine of the Company members of the Lodge, and what there is left of us, are known by that name now.

Tomorrow is Sunday, the day for smoking, washing, and mending up old cloths, tapping Boots, &c for us. The afternoon is occupied by packing Vic's deer in from the hills, one buck lasts us just a week.

Ed. is writing to David Dixson, on the other end of the chest, and I intend to do likewise soon I know I ought to write to several of my old friends, and would have done it before but, had no convenient place to write now I will between this and Spring You can show my letter to all whom you think take any interest in Ben's, Ed's, or my welfare, with my best respects. Sarah, your Hussy

is the best little arrangement out, and is full of the same little *fixens* you put in it keeps our clothes whole when we are not too lazy to sew. I am much obliged to you, dear Mother, for your thoughtful kindness, sending Olie on the jump with that big quilt, and all the other little niceties, with which you provided me, and all of you, my dear friends, were very kind to me always. I know, and regret much, that I did not re[t]urn your kindness, as I ought, but it is not too late now, if I live to see home again. Cassius, I suppose has grown to a man's estate, both in mental and bodily faculties. Charlie, too has become a bumping big boy I should like to see the little fellow, as well as all of you. Charlie do not neglect your studies while young, or you will regret it sadly, when too old to resume them. I did not improve the opportunities with which I was blessed, and have had cause to regret it often, & will have throughout my life.

50

My letters to Presper [Persifer] F. Smith, * I shall never use, unless I meet with some serious accident, which will prevent me from gaining a livelihood by hard labor, but this I do not expect nor any other bad luck, except getting rich and returning home. The only bad habit, in the Ladies opinion, I have contracted, is smoking, which is my chief delight after every meal and all the evening & all day Sunday. I think laboring men have the right to smoke as much as they please Tell all the girls that I will make one of the best of husbands as I can rock the cradle to perfection Let a 1/2 dozen wait for me-

General Persifer F. Smith, commandant of the United States troops in California, was a strong support to immigrants in trouble.

My ideas have crowded themselves into my head, in such a mixed up manner, that I have not made a very good reading letter, so far, but I will be satisfied, if you receive it, such as it is, of which, I am very uncertain. Did you Father, take the contract of building the canal at Fort Win[n]ebago? I am very anxious to hear all about the business both domestic and merchantile but perhaps I shall not until I hear it at home from your lips.

The grass is growing finely and crops also although there are heavy frosts nights--our cattle are doing well in the hills near us getting as good grass as there is on the Ranches below & saving us the cost of Ranching them which is \$5. a yoke per month--This is not the beautiful country,

flowing with milk & honey, as it has been represented, in former letters, from great men as for farming, it will not do, except in a few places, on the banks of the rivers. I would not give ten cents an acre, for the whole country, after the gold is taken 51 out, yet, from representations of former men, I thought I was bound for a perfect Paradise, but, I think the Old Badger State beats (it), in every respect, with the exception of the gold dust. We are in the very handsomest situation I have seen in the whole country, between two high hills, in a beautiful little valley, covered now with young green grass. The house fronts the East, with a window on the Western side, so that we have, in full view, the rising, and setting, of the sun. This would all be much more pleasant, if we could make an ounce a day, but we have come to the conclusion, to take it easy this winter, and make enough to make it up next spring. I have often thought of the brick store's rickety condition and almost expect to find it down when I return, I hope not As to the house, I know that will stand as long as you want to use it, and generations after. By the way, what room will you give me when I return I am not peticular, but am a fool for asking such questions now. it come into my head, and forced its self out. Cash, write to Will. Childs, and tell him to write me soon, as I have written him, tell him where to direct letters. Claghorn is raising an awfull noise building a table--Rasdall is writing home. They have desolved partnership. Give my love to all of my friends reserving a share for yourselves and remember me as your Affectionate Friend. . . .

How does little Ella flourish and what is to be the name of the next? Two very important questions Sarah & Eliab.

In my next I will give you a sketch of my journey over the plains and mountains which will be written soon, but when it will reach the Post Office I know not.

52

I believe Parson Reed is in Sacramento City telling the good tidings to the people--

I have grown very fast and weigh more than 1 ever did. I can eat as much as the next man & then be hungry all of the time which I think is a good sign of a healthy boy, Don't you?

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Jan 1st 1850 Cosumnes river I recieved your kind letters of Aug. 19th 3 days ago by one of our Company, who returned then from Sacramento City,--You cannot immagine how happy and delighted I was to hear from you & of all the good people of Madison. I also recieved at the same time the two letters of Stirling's and John Catlin's, they have come a round-about way to reach me having several different post marks on it. the rest I have with me but shall never make any use of them if I continue in good health and in good *working condition* as I am determined too gamble in the mines untill I leave this cursed country and if I cannot make that *aforesaid pile* mining I will return home poor as *Job's turkey*. It has relieved my heart of a great load hearing that you are all in good health and doing well and that you are comfortably situated in the new house which I know without being told is a beautiful residence. It was unexpected to me recieving any letters this winter as I knew you would direct them to San Francisco where I supposed they would lay untill I was returning home, but they now have arranged it so that letters are forwarded when orders are sent. I have recieved no papers as yet, but am heartily obliged to you Eliab, for the 53 Argus. I should like to see my letter although I did not write it with any thoughts of its being published, yet if you thought it worth while, I am perfectly satisfied, still I think you put a little *soft soap* in you[r] account of it, pardon that expression Ben, and Ed have recieved nothing, as yet, from home but my hearing was some consolation to them, Although you mentioned none of their friends, they take it for granted that they are all well, or you would have mentioned it.

I think you must have changed Ella's name, as you call her Lottie,^{*} if I remember right you told me Ella, at any rate Ella is much the prettiest name, & one that I like. You have learned if you have yet recieved my former letters, that I did not write from Fort Larime, but Ed did, and his letter left after the mail which was burned on the Algoma and has probably reached its destination ere this. You are now having merry times with Libby Gordon & E. B's sister & you cannot immagine how I long to be with you. I would give two ounces to see Libby if she has gone home tell her in your letter to wait for me Sarah I tell Ed & Ben that they had better hurry home or all the girls will be married if they continue on as fast a gait as they have begun as for me I have other fish to fry at present, and am in no hurry to get home, except [to see] all within the walls of the brick house. Your advise Father & E. B. is in good time, for here a boy is truly in the very gates of destruction, as all kinds of

vices hold unlimited sway, in the cities and mines, but I hope and trust I shall be able to leave the country as pure and inocent as I came in (and that ain't anything 54 to brag on, is it?) Your kind and fatherly words will sustain me in my resolution & assist me much in withstanding temptations--You know already by my former letters what *vices* I have fell into, that of smoking, yet if you knew the pleasant hours I spend thinking of home while my head can hardly be seen through the thick cloud of tobacco smoke, you would surly forgive me--Christmas we spent working hard--on that day Ed & I done a big days work & made thirty six dolars the best we have done in the country.

So did he in the letter of April 10, 1849. In later letters the name Ella displaced Lottie.

You are aware that my birthday was last wensday. Father you and I are geting old^{*} --Ben returned last week having been gone just a month, he has been through the richest mines where we shall go early in the spring and I think by next fall will have our pile in our breeches and on the way home if luck is on our side, at least we will do our best to return then. Dear Mother, those lines done my heart good & may heaven bless and protect you and all the family and dear little Charlie your simple "Wegates [*wie geht es*] Lucius" done me as much good as a whole letter, it shows me that you have not forgotten brother Lucius which I never thought. Bc a good boy and shun all bad company as you would a snake It may seem out of place for such as I to give you that advice but it is sincere and honest While here alone in the hills I can think of bye gone days and see my errors, and I fear many a care worn look of my dear father and Mother, has been caused by some acts of mine, these thoughts make my heart sad, and I long for the time to come when I can be a comfort to them, to help them bear thier burdons

NEW FORT KEARNEY

55 of worldly matter easily--Well--Well--I can't waist paper for such sad lines so for the little news I have--I wrote you the 9 of Dec. and sent it to the P.M. We are all living along the same old way & not working very hard as it has rained considerable & when it don't rain we do not work hard commencing late & quitting early--the reason is this, the diggings are poor and it will not pay to spend much hard labor for 6 or 8 dollars a day which is all we can make as a general thing. Yet I am perfectly satisfied that we are doing as well as 9/10 of the miners in the country for very little can

be done in the hills or dry diggings the ground is so full of water, but next summer we will make the days count if we find these rich diggings and we know where they are.

Father and son had the same "birthday," December 27, there being exactly thirty years difference in their ages.

By your words I see you think I am not digging. I would not have come into the mines if I had have had a small capital to speculate on and with prudence I could have been rich now but I had nothing and was determined to hoe my own way through this country I would not draw from home. Now Dean I do not know that I am (in fact I know I am not) able to advise you about coming but will tell you my opinion if you were out here by the first opening of spring you could make a fortune soon. I do not know how much capital will be employed in business operations but I think there will be many who are mining will leave the mines and go into all kinds of business and thus stock the market with all kinds of merchantdisse many will be speculating in property and stock. They now hear of the immense fortunes being made and are determined to try the business besides those who are now here will have the advantage over new comers as they are now learning in what branch of business will be the best 56 and will be able to have every nessessary article on hand in large quantities early in the spring this will bring things down to moderate prices only affording reasable profits. I would therefore advise you and all others who can make a good income from thier business not to leave for this country It will do for people who are in a *tite place* to risk it but one in your situation I would not advise you to come. The above are not my opinions only but I have talked with others in the city yet I may be wrong and things turn out different from what I expect but I would not risk it.

I may before I go home, if I see a good prospect go into some kind of business, but not untill I am satisfied that I cannot make anything mining. Landed property is very high both in country and town. Lots in San Francesco & Sacramento are up to the highest notch. Tenaments rent for the most absurd prices in fact every thing in the country is so, and a change must take place soon I do not see how such a state of things can last for any lenth of time--

Sarah, you say not dig if I am not stronger than I used to be but if you could see what a pile I can eat & how strong and healthy I am you would think just as I do that digging is the best business for

me. I never was in such perfect good health in my life and if I take care of myself (which I shall try) I shall continue so. The boys tell me I have grown very much but I don't feel any larger than usual although my pants begin to crall [crawl] up my legs some. I have plenty of clothes and to spare. Clothing is cheap but boots and shoes are high, boots from \$30 to \$60 per pair shoes a[n] ounce a pair. I am really very much flattered by your account of the interest the people take in me, and it shall be a fresh inducement ⁵⁷ for me to walk straitforward, and deserve their interest and attachment but prehaps they are only *Talking*. Give Miss Ames *that was* --my best respects-- Two pretty Girls & twins too--well, well, tell Cash & Sim to go it while they are young & stick to them close--Simon I present you my best respects, hoping that I shall have the pleasure of your acquaintance at some future period--now is not the best I can do it up for you. Give Thad my *best love* & tell him I remember his last words to me at Thomsons and if he has forgotten them, I will bring them to his recollection, to his *sorrow* by other means than words. I could give you E. B. a few items, about the woman you spoke of in your letter not very much to he[r] credit which I have learned here so far from her. I am sorry to hear of the death of my old school mate Lester P. but all must pay that great debt of nature--This is New Years & 1850 how time flies it seems but yesterday that I began to write 1849--Yet how many things have crouded themselves into that seemingly short space, one great one for me that of leaving the home of my youth and going out into the turmoil and temptations of the world. Yet, as Sarah says I will try and meet it manfully. One would think I was crazy or a fool to read this letter but so many thoughts come crouding into my brain and striving to get out that it bothers me--first thoughts come, first put down, is my rule of writing, thinking, of course, that all my thoughts will interest you. We had [a] fine dinner today, consisting of Hare-soup and that greatest of Luxuries *Potatoes* the first I have tasted scince I left the States. We can not get what the poorest low lived creature lives on at home, even the hogs have plenty of vegetables These ⁵⁸ I bought in Sacramento paying *only* sixty cents a pound for them. I suppose you have a boat on 3d Lake, if not you lose half of the pleasure of the new house Moonlight rides &c.*

They evidently had such a boat in the October following, for Fredrika Bremer suggested a boat ride and received the smiling reply that it was Sunday.

Don't you see how *romantic* I am getting. Every body are enjoying pleasant sleighrides now & I can see my young friends assembled at Bird's^{*} "tucking the light fantastic toe" to night while I am sitting by the big fire place of our cabin writing about them.

A. A. Bird's hotel.

I wonder if they ever miss us or think of us--but I don't care much, as long as I know you all are thinking of & loving me still. I have not heard of Henry Abby for sometime I am hoping to run on to him in my travells next summer. Darwin Sawtell promised to write you on his return that he had seen me, and he could give you a great deal of information about the business operations of the country as he was actively engaged. Sarah if you write his *sisters* give them my best respects. I'm very thoughtfull on such subjects.

I put a most *beautiful* pair of Soles on my Boots the other day it looks very much likes Wilcox's work. We have to turn our hands to every thing here where money can't buy all favors. The most troublesome job is washing. Mother would not have her line disgraced by such dirty shirts as my very cleanest are.

I am sorry to hear that Cassius has been ill & hope that he will not remain so long. The election is over & I am very anctious to hear the result. I hope Father is reelected as it is a very comfortable & easy birth and \$800 a year don't set a man back any. I don't know 59 what office I shall run for, when I become a politition, but think I will commence with *fence viewer*. Victor Seaman is siting opposite me writing to his wife from whom he recieved a letter by the same post I did mine. We were the only lucky dogs who had recieved any word from home. His wife write[s] that Brown & Jenney McHugh are to be married soon, is it so! If you could have seen us when we recieved our letters you would have laughed & prehaps called us fools, such hurrahing, jumping, yelling, & screaming--my hat fell into the water pail but I could not stop to pick it out until I had read my letter all through. So you will take good care and write often when I tell you that I live upon your letters--with a small sprinkling of Pork & Bread--Vic. has been very unsuccessful in hunting for the last week, not being able to get any thing but an old Buck so poor that he would not bring it in so we are now living on Salt meat altogether, for the first time scince we have been in the country.

Deer are getting very scarce and --“ *dears*”--are still scarcer. I know of one in the city with whom we travelled on the plains When coming from the city, with provisions, I overtook her brother stuck in a mud hole & had the impudence to charge him five dollars for pulling him out. Was'nt that mean? but it's “dog eat dog” & every man for him self in this country & if you get a favor you must pay for it so if I favor any body they must pay me as I pay others. You may think this signs of a close, grasping, disposition but it is the only way to get along and keep up with the times. At taverns in the mines the price is two dollars a meal and the same for lodging.

Sarah You have by this time been east and seen all of your Massachuset[t]s friends and probably brot 60 E. B.'s sister Harriet back with you. Write me all about them & Hattie if I may call her so *at a distance* Write me of good old Cleveland too where you of course stoped. Ben. is writing to his brother John T. & Ed is also writing to some of his friend[s]. We are always talking of home and the prospects of geting there soon. Cash you recolect that that blue Broadcloth cloak of Sarah's was lost at Waukiesha, well, while laying in my bunk the other morning I happened to think where it was when I last saw it. Count H-- (but his name would'nt look well) put it on and wore it home when it was raining and I think never brought it back,

I have a chance to send [this] to the P.M. & can't finish.

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Cosumnes River Febry 12th 1850 You will doubtless recieve my last letter dated Jan. 1st unfinished. I had intended to send it to the city by one of our company & expected no other chance but he not going I was disappointed and while at work a few days ago a man with whom we are acquainted and willing to trust our letters with stoped on his way to the city and I was obliged to send mine unfinished although I had written all of any importance I knew and was only waiting for something new. I have recieved no more letters from you scince the first & I am now getting rather anctious to hear but when I get a little down-in-the-mouth I read your old letters over finding some consolation in it. We are in such a retired spot that we see no one and hear but a very little of what is going

FORDING THE SOUTH PLATTE

61 on in the states or in this country it is said that the only way to hear the news in the mines is by eastern papers, then you will hear more of your own *family* than you can learn here the word among the miners is *Mum*, "Ask me no questions & I'll tell you no lies. In travelling around the mine for information ten chances to one if you get the truth unless you come across an acquaintance. It is just so with us we do not pretend to tell the truth about our digings because no one else will tell us what they are doing. Prehaps you cannot concieve it possible that the accounts we first had from this country were not exagerated Yet from what I have seen & heard I think they are all true gold is plenty & if a man will work he is sure of good wages When I first came here I thought they had been told rather large but I knew nothing of the mines then nor how to work to advantage but now Ed. & I can make things fly around to make money I think we are in the poorest digings in the country and we have made as much this winter as any store in Madison can make in a year. About four weeks ago the river rose very high and drove us on the highest part of the bar where we supposed there was no gold of any consequence, but to our surprise we found it the richest part so we all took our ground and went to work, scince that it has not rained and we have all done well. Ed & I have taken out over *Twelve hundred dollars* or over 2 ounces a day which is good wages. This with what we had before makes us nearly Two thousand dollars. \Ye can yet make from \$30 to \$40 a day in our hole but we can work it out in a few day[s] and shall leave here although we could make 2 or 3 thousand by next fall but we want to make 10 times that sum & expect to 62 do it if we can keep our health. It makes Ed & I rather stiff today having worked four weeks without cessation for the first time in our lives, but we alway[s] commence later and quit earlier than any of the company still we have made more than any of the rest except Rasdall who has made more than any other one on the bar I think our chance is good this summer to make something through Van Court of St. Louis with whom Ben. has been with all winter. Ben was here New Years on a visit & made \$75--but Van Court sent for him to hurry up as he had heard of some very rich diggings and was anctious to get there as soon as the snow on the mountains would permit him to travell. Ben. has been back once scince after some mules & horses which he had bought in company with Cormack one of the Company & he told us that they were just as sure of a fortune as if they had the money in the bank. When we leave here we shall find them in the mountains somewhere, as he will leave directions for us where to go. I hope we shall be successfull as I shall never mine any

more after this summer and probably shall come home which I assure you I long to do if I do not think it advisable to return home then I shall go down to Lower California and spend the winter. I do not think I ought to leave this country without seeing that part of it, do you? The business of the spring has commenced and the miners are travelling in every direction but most of them are going to the Ubah where they have been taking it out by the lb. Some to Feat[h]er river the Stanislaus Trinity Middle Fork & in fact every direction we steer for the Middle Fork where we will stay all summer. The City of Sacramento has been flooded awfully this winter the water 63 being from five to Eight feet deep, carrying away houses and doing a large amount of damage, all the inhabitation were obliged to live on scaffolds or vessels or move back near Sutters Fort, where the ground is high. There is a great deal of sickness there now, and cannot help but be more, when it gets warm. Last fall there was at least 500 dead oxen & mules lying around the streets besides, the water is very bad, causing the dysentery, but up in this part of the country, the air is pure, and water good & if a man will take care of himself right there is not much danger of sickness.

The great danger is the scurvy caused by eating salt provisions & no vegetables, Vegetables we will have with us, cost what they may & every thing which we think will prevent it as it is very fatal, not on account of the disease but for the want of good care & proper nourishment. We were very fortunate in storing our trunks on a vessel as they would have been under water, now they are safe & sound. Stock is very high, at present mules are selling for from 3 to 500 dollars & cattle about the same a yoke. We have a yoke & a half of cattle to sell and one mule to buy. Rasdall, Ed & I will travel together this summer Bill is very good and accommodating but ----- is a Liar. so is -- ---- Keep that. Brooks has been about twenty miles from us all winter on the South Fork also Porterfield. Seaman & Claghorn were up there and saw them not long since.

March 17th/50 The only reason I can give for writing such letters as this is, that the uncertainty of having an opportunity of sending them to the P.M. hinders me from closing them, as I wish you to hear all the news I can pick up--When I began this letter about a month 64 ago we thought the rainy season was over but it has rained a great deal since and we have not made much but it is clear now & I am in hopes that the weather will settle as we are nearly out of provisions and will be obliged to send for more or leave for the city. I do not think we will leave here a month yet. I have been to

Weaverville & saw Capt. Waters & Co also Eavens of Mil[waukee] They were all well. Stuart of Dane Co. was here a day or two ago on his way south in serch of better digings

The last I heard of Smidth [Smith?] he was dealing *Monte* at Hangtown Don't tell that because gambling is thought no sin here. Many are working hard every day for the Monte & Faro banks. Such will never go home with much, if they ever go at all. There is a great rush for the Tuly lakes [Tulare Lake?] about two hundred miles south where it is said, some very rich digings have been discovered & I suppose it is so but I shall not go and will try to get every one I can to go. That is the way with all the miners who are going in any direction to try and get the crowd the opposite way I have not heard from Beng. scince he was here. I suppose he is in the mountains where the snow is deep. I got a letter for him from John T. No 1 dated Aug. 19th containing about the same general news as yours. I have recieved nothing from you scince your first letters but heard the result of the election which pleased me much. Henry Abby is working on Mormon island about 20 miles from here. I have not seen him but hear he is doing well. The Mineral Point boys on the Stanislaus have done well this winter. Young Tilly & three others have taken out over Eighty pounds of gold but hold--you do not hear of those who worked all winter and hardly paid their 65 board, nor do I but I [know] there are hundreds in that *fix*.

I again repeat what I said in my former letter that no person should throw up a good business and come to this country, although I do say if a man has his health and will work he can make money but I would never run the risk if I was again at home and it is said by every body, almost, here "if I ever get back I will stay & God forgive me."

We go on the good old *Bible doctrine* "Take up thy bed and walk" for if a man here goes to stay overnight he takes his bed on his back. The taverns in the mines would amuse you, being small log cabins with very little furniture with a small table and a few whiskey bottles in one corner. They are always crowded full, when bed-time comes all drop on the ground floor, and dream of the pleasant homes in the East, I suppose, on a supper which cost \$2--If God will forgive me, and alow me to make a small pile this summer I never will trouble this country any more, but break for home. I get

home often in my dreams sometimes clerking sometimes dancing & at others in the City Hotell on a visit I suppose as [because] I live in the big brick now.

Thos. W. Sutherland and Count H-- arrived at San Diego this winter by the southern route & Tom is Alcalde of that place now. I heared that they lost all of their stock and were helped through by Uncle Sam Count Riner started from San Diego about the first of February for Sacramento valley with a drove of mules for sale and ought to be here now He will make money on them if he has no bad luck.

I thought some of sending you a draft for 5 or 600.00 dollars but the shave is so great that it looks like 66 throwing away money. They can be bought for 3 per cent but they only give \$16 per ounce for gold which is worth over \$18 in the states which is a large per centage yet if I thought you were in want of Money I would send it, and if, during the summer you should be cramped or like fly] to be so you shall have all I can raise as soon as I can get it to you as I have no use for it here. Libby Gordon is with you now I suppose & Harriet Dean all having a good time I hope give them both my respects I showed Ed sisters letter and the whole family (our family here) have harped on the pretty girl from Ohio ever scince, ain't that rich!

You recolect Young Fairchild who was in Madison delivering temperance lectures? he is at San Francisco acting on the stage as Yankee with great success. I saw Capt. Sullen who used to clerk for Baxter & Hall not long since he has gone up on the Middle Fork. Ed has been unwell lately but is getting better, he is as fat as a fool--as for myself I have been blest with the most perfect health all winter and at present, still I wear the same long, lean, presbyterian face I used to and wi.il try and show you the said face next fall. I have written every scrap of news I know and will write again soon. It is very uncertain when this will get to the P.M. hoping that this will reach you in good season

I remain Your affectionate Friend, Son, & Brother. . . .

To His Brother Cassius Cosumnes River May 20th 1850 Eldorado Co, IOOF Bar. I recieved your letter, dated Jan 30th in due season, the first I have recieved from you but I hope not the

FIRST VIEW OF ROCKY MOUNTAINS

67 first you have written. I recieved one from Mother & Charlie of the same date about two weeks before yours and had dispatched an answer to it when yours came to hand. I was very much pleased with Charlie's letter and yours also only you did not tell one half the news which you knew would interest me but I know your failing. There has not much transpired with us of any consequence scince I last wrote. Ben. came down from the mountains two weeks ago and packed some provisions from the city to his camp. he is as sanguine as ever about a fortune and I think his prospects are good he has been here for the last four days and left this morning for Big Cannon [Cañon] as he is obliged to be there to keep possession of his claim on the first day of June as yet he's not able to work the water being too high they have everything prepaired so that they can go to work as soon as the water will permit. As for our prospects here on this river I think they are good but we know nothing certian we shall at any rate turn the river and see what it will turn out. Ed & I have not done much work for the last month as neither of us have been well. I am troubled with lame shoulders caused from the strain they received on my trip from Milwaukie three years ago. I am inclined to think they will trouble me all summer & if they do I cannot work. I shall leave the mines next fall and either go home or to the Southern part of this country.

You say you think you missed it in not coming with me, I say, you may *thank your God* that you did not because if you did not make a fortune you would never be worth a d--d for any business in the States after doing business after the fashion of this country. I don't see how I could be satisfied to work for 12 or 68 15 dollars per Month when I can make that here in two days, and this is one reason why I hesitate on going home next fall. I must have a sight at the country & Spanish girls of the south before I leave and may prehaps get caught. Count Riner & Adam Lemon are here they came up from San Diego with a drove of mules and went up on the North fork of the American and took a claim with Rasdall & Pheonix of Delavan Wis. but the water being too high to work they came here to work. I recieved a long letter from Thos. Sutherland, he is well also Count & family. Mrs. S-- is in a bad way so Riner says--I was in the City week before last and went to the circus & Theattere. Fairchild is a star actor & singer I brought our trunks out with me--found every thing all right We had a great time looking at the mineatures and talking about you all. All who see Fathers

picture pronounce it very fine looking. Not much like his sons. I have grown out of all of my fine clothes and every thing else I have not worn out--Wouldn't I look nice dressed up in Broadcloth after going the way I have for the last year, rough but clean. I am very glad to hear that you have become a *gallant* and troubling the girls--go it while you are young--I've quit--

You have probably recieved in one or two of my letters a small quantity of gold. I have collected a few larger specimens of gold & quarts, to take home with me, and will get some more. We get very fine gold here, but where Ben. is it is very course and if he get[s] a pile we will have *all* specimens. I will get you and all the family rings made out of my gold and bring [them to] you if I can afford it & I think I can--Ben wrote a long letter to John T. yesterday & Ed. is writing to Dave 69 Dixson. I shall write him soon--Have you ordered the papers to be sent to Sacramento City? if not, do so.

Mining will be carried on largely this summer and many will make fortunes but by far the greater majority will do but little. I hope to be of the former, but God only knows what will happen to me. Ned Seaman is agoing to take some scetches in this valley for me. I want a scetch of our cabin and grounds around to look at in future years. I shall always look back with pleasure to my residence under this humble *mud roof*, although I have to cook, wash & be chamber-maid its nothing when you get used to it. We shall commence our race next week, and then I commence work for the summer if my shoulders are well. Every stream in the country will be turned in all places pract[ic]able this summer, You will hear of some big piles being taken out of the beds of some. You may possibly see me four or five months after you recieve this and untill then I remain your Affectionate Brother. . . .

P.S. Love to Mother, Father, Sister, Charlie, Eliab and Little one & all enquiring friends

To John Wilson Cosumnes River June 1st 1850 IOOF Bar-- Your letter to Beng. dated April 8th No. 4 was recieved by us about a week ago I was very sorry you had cause to use such language to Beng. and am certian that ere this you have seen that no fault can be found with him for not writing oftener? He has written 3 or 4 times, to my certian knowledge, and letters long enough to please any

man on earth 12 pages--giving 70 you a full description of his travels around through the mines, of his and our prospects.

He has not lived with us as you may have learned from my former letters but with a Mr Van Court of St Louis near Georgetown between the South and Middle forks of the American river. I do not know the small peticulars of his winters doings but he has written it all to you.

He was here three weeks ago when he wrote you a long letter and I do not think he will be able to write you more than once and maybe not at all this summer and you would excuse him if you knew how he is situated in the mountains with Us it is much diferent we have every thing as convenient and nearly as comfortable as you at home and can write as often as we please, I will keep you advised of our doings and of Bengs as far as we can all summer either by writing to you or through my letters to *my family* and will manage to get all of your letters to him, which he is very much pleased to recieve.

Now as to what news I can give you which is scarce I assure you living as we do out of the way of every body and seeing but very few strangers and geting but few papers, We are not doing very well mining at present not making over 8 dollars per day by hard work, this sounds large in your ears but not one miner in a thousand will stay and be content in a place and not make more and it will not pay but little clear of expences, all that we are staying here for is to turn the river, by which we hope to make something handsome, but we do [not] know anything cirtain and may not make anything. It is a perfect lottery in the mines one out of a great many will get a pile. Men 71 do not work here as they do in the states and cannot untill they get acclimated.

I tell you swinging the pick and shovell is no very pleasant business to those who never worked before. Oh! Lord! How it make[s] my back ache to think of it, still I can stand it very well when the dirt is rich but when poor and I know I am not geting pay for my work it goes awfully against the grain. We commence work just after day light and work untill the sun be- comes to warm, then lay over five hours when it becomes some cooler we give it another turn. It is getting to be very warm and will be perfect *scorching* weather after [a] while.

Gambling, drinking & *houses of ill-fame* are the chief amusements of the country, therefore you see that *we* have nothing but work, reading & writing to amuse us as we are all nice young men and do not frequent such places. Sacramento city is growing very fast and will be a large city soon. Small town[s] are springing up on all sides of us & the country is becoming more like our young states than a wild unsettled land, still it is a rough country after all. At the taverns in the mines there are no chairs no beds or bedclothes except blankets in which thousands have slept before and all are full of Body Lice. I always pack my bed on my back so that I can keep clear of them.

John, I am very sorry to see so many coming from Madison & vicinity to this state because I know that they will most of them go away poorer than they started, if they would move here with the intention of making this their home it would do very well, but most of them think they will make a pile of Gold in a short time and can go back but I am afraid they will be disappointed, 72 appointed, not but that there is plenty of gold here but it cannot be obtained in such large quantities as most expect. Every man is sure of good wages if he will work and can lay up more than he can in the states working at any trade. Yet I consider any one worse than a fool to throw up a good business and come here, those who cannot lose any thing by coming like many young men who came last year are doing well to come. I would not take \$10,000 for what I have seen and learned scince I left home and will try and add more to it before I return. If we (Beng Ed & I) do well this summer I think all of us will go home but if we have only 4 or 5 thousand dollars only one will go to take it home and invest it. If we do not make any thing God only knows when I shall return although I am very anctious to. I think our prospect good and Beng is very sure in his own mind that he will make a pile--I hope so. Ed recieved a long letter from George Paine and is answering it. All send their love, Ed too Yours &c. . . .

Show this to Father if you please, I wrote them not long scince and will again soon.

The piece of Gold you find enclosed we send you ass specimen--it will make you a fine pin which you may wear in memory of us & Beng.

To His Father South Fork of the American River July 6th 1850 I have not done my duty to you about writing but I have not been situated so that I could conveniently. I have been travelling most of the time untill last week when I settled here to turn the South Fork of the American river. I am four miles below Coloma and

FORT LARAMIE

73 by the merest chance in the world got into the Company. I was on my way to the North Fork of the Middle Fork of the American river with Riner, Vic. Seaman & Adam Lemon. when we got to Coloma I found this chance of joining the Co. to turn the river and did so, as did Adam and I think we are in a good way for a fortune. Brooks is 1/4 mile below us turning the river in a spot which he knows is rich. he has been here scince last August and has made considerable. Peter Cavinaugh is with him. he also has done well. We have now done four days work on our race Moving rocks which would discourage most Co's but most of the Co. are strong hard working men who can do any thing any other men can do & I manage to hold my own with them. We will finish the race this week but cannot put in the dam untill the First of August and I think that we will do well as the bed of the river has been ascertained to be rich just below and just above us.

We have about eighty rods of the bed of the river which if it [is] rich will be all we can work out untill the rainy season sets in.

T. E. Parmile of Racine is President of the Company & I (myself) am Secritary. it consists of 20 men--

Mr. Parmile requested me to make some apolege for him to you for not writing as he promised and he is perfectly excuseable. Ben was here on the Fourth on his way to our house on the Cosumnie river. his claim in the Big or Eldorado Cannon has not turned out any thing and he is going to work on the Middle Fork soon. he is well. Ed is still on the Cosumnes but not doing anything. he will go North with Ben.

I spent the Fourth in Coloma but nothing much was done. I saw George Vail of Waukiesha there. he is at 74 work above Georgetown & making Money. Young McCracken of Milwaukie is with him. George Blodgett of Milwaukie is living in Coloma practicing [illegible] Judge Bryant of Racine arrived in Coloma this week well.

The emigrants are coming in all of the time having made the trip very quick. I am very sorry to see so many of our Madison friends on their way here and the most of them will rue the day they ever started for the time for making fortunes quick is over never to return and things will settle down to *small wages and poor living* just as it is in the states before long. You need not think that because I write in this strain that I am discouraged or disheartened--far from it. but we who have been here this year have the advantage of those coming this year, knowing the mines better, knowing how to work better, and, better used to the climate. The mines will be over run with people which will give all a *poor* chance of doing well. & all kinds of business is and will be overdone. I cannot give you any general news of the country as I know none being off of the main road and seeing none but our own company. Walker was here yesterday on his way North. he has not done much as yet nor do I think he will this summer

All of the Madison boys are well. I have recieved nothing from you scince Charlie's & Mothers letter but think I will by the last mail at least I hope so. I want very much to return this fall and will if the river proves to be good if not God only knows when I shall be able to go any where, but I have no fears at present about the river and am confident of making somthing.

I hear by letter of Brooks that Madison is growing fast and am glad to hear it. I hope to be able to do somthing for it when I get back

75

Give my love to all enquiring friends and to distant friends. I often think of you all and will. I have been obliged to write this in a great hurry as it [is] most time to go to work--besides my hands are so sore that I can scarcely hold a pen--handling rock--but I hope to be able to write you a longer & better letter soon Your True Friend. . . .

P.S. Direct letters as before, to Sacramento City How is the babe--

To J. C. Fairchild and Family South Fork July 20th 1850 Yesterday was the happiest day I have Seen for along time as I recieved then Fathers letter of Jan 24th Cassius of April 15th Sarah's, Libby Gordon's, Hatty Deans & Franky Smith's of Jan. 26th and Sarah's of April 14th & mothers also. Now don't you think any reasonable man ought to be happy after reading so many and such kind letters from those whom he holds most dear on earth. I can only say in answer to Fathers that he has ere this recieved my letters written scince I have been in the mines and therefore it is not nessessary for me to repeat all that I think. I am very happy to know that things are moving right and to see that the office will pay you better than heretofore. I assure you Father that you cannot wish me back more heartily than I wish to be by your side, and under the influence of your advice true, I have as yet done nothing very bad, nor do I expect to, but one so young as I ought to be near a person he can put confidence in and be governed in minor matters by him. I long to be with the Family although I am 76 not in the least homesick on the contrary I feel perfectly contented most of the time and am willing to stay here as long as I think I can do any good by so doing but as soon as I see I cannot make a fortune here without staying years to do it I will then take the next steamer for home, but you may rest assured that I shall not come home poorer than when I started--Now I am just as certian of a fortune (it may not be a large one) this summer as though I had it in my pocket now--I will tell you why--I am with a company of 20 men known as Benedict Hays & Co, for the purpose of turning and working the bed of the South Fork of the American Fork of the Sacramento river. A. E. Brooks has a claim for the same purpose 1/4 mile below us. Brooks assures me that he knows the bed of the stream where he is to be rich and the company above know that their claim is very rich, now if it is rich just above and just below I contend, Mr. President, that ours is rich also. In fact from all I can hear I feel very confident that we will get a few thousand dollars apiece, but, we are working blind folded now and it is possible that we may not find much in the bed, if so it will depend altogether on other circumstances than money whether I come home this fall. We have our race finished and have been digging for gold for 3 days, but cannot make much. We join our race with two other companies and make one dam answer the purpose of all & all join in building it. I think about one week from next Monday we can begin it and it will take two weeks to complete

it which will make 3 or 4 weeks before we can know what our show is for the "pile" about which there is so much talk. We are four miles of [from] the City of Coloma have a fine large Brush house furnished with a table 77 four three leged stools & four bunks which makes us quite comfortable don't you think so? I am messing with Benedict Hays, our directer and head man, as you see by the name of the Company, Adam Lemon of Madison--and Edward Gill of Con. We get along very pleasant and agreeable together. I wrote you a letter two weeks ago which I sincerly hope you will not get as I wrote it when I was not well and was in a great Hurry but I had not written in so long a time that I was determined to write somthing no matter what, if you get it I hope you will "pass it's imperfections by--nor view it with a critic's eye" Oh! Lord! T. E. Parmilie is here and was a member and president of our company untill yesterday when he sold his share for \$300.00 dollars and he is now intending to go home by the next steamer, if he does so, I shall send this by him.

I would like to hear Mother write in a different strain and not be so gloomy as there is nothing in the world to harm her boy in this country any more than [in] any other and it is only those who live like hogs & those who drink who are sick and die as a general thing. As for the cholera do not be alarmed about that as you know that it never rages in a Granite country this is decidedly one and I do not think it will tuch us at all. This is the most changable climate I ever saw The nights are very cold untill ten in the morning, when it grows warm enough to schorch a man untill four in the eve-- but [it] is so every day and we can prepare for the change before hand. We work from five in the morning untill Eleven and then lay by untill three when we work untill Seven-- making ten hours a day which is work enough for a *counter Hopper* like me and bucks me through by day light. Ben. Wilson was here last 78 week on his way down to the cabin. his claims are all good for nothing in the Mountains and he is now where he first started only we have made somthing. He has now gone South on Business about which I will write you when he returns if he is successfull in doing what he has gone for he will stay all summer, if not he will go in to the mountains again as he says he can make an ounce per day. Ed. is still on the Cosumnes waiting on Ben to go with him. he recieved a leter from Dave Dickson

Cadwise was in Coloma and well I do not think he has made much. nor the other Boys either--I am glad to hear that Charlie is improving in his studies and growing. I think be will make a good

scholar and the Flower of the family or rather of the Boys I am not in receipt of any new and interesting General news and will therefore leave the following page until I send this.

You cannot imagine my feelings of gratitude towards my kind Friends Hattie Dean Frank Smith & Libbie Gordon all strangers to me for writing to me such kind words of regard and encouragement. I feel what I lost by not being at home to enjoy myself with you. [line illegible] have her near us, I think he will if he has *scense* Don't you? Mother thinks that I need to go [to] school, and so do I but I do not believe that it would do me any good unless I intended to go through college which I have no notion of as I don't believe I have the brains to back such a course and have but little ambition to *pound* knowledge into my head still I will think of it and may change my mind before the time comes. I may have got my pile before you receive this and I may be farther from it than I am now, *only there is no chance for the 79 latter assertion to be true*, as the river is sure to pay good wages, if not a fortune. I shall write a letter to Doct. Woodruff and let him know where I am as well as some others from Madison. If I stay in this country [this] winter I shall probably take a trip south when I will see what can be done with the Count H-- about that Debt-- Old Skinner was enquiring for me this spring to pay me but did not find me.

Give my friends my best respects and be sure that until I write I will Yours. . . .

To His Brother Charles South Fork Aug 25th 1850 I received your letter with Sarahs enclosed, dated June 15th last week. I need not tell you how welcome it was as you know that any thing from home is always so. I wrote you all a long letter in answer [to] Sarahs, Mothers, & Cassius, of April & Fathers and *the Girls* of and earlier date, June [July] 20th which you have received ere this I have been well with the exception of an attack of the Typus Fever which confined me over two weeks but now I am well and hearty but perhaps a *little lazy* To tell the truth hard work does not agree with me & I shall not do any more of it after finishing this job on the river. The emigrants are coming in fast and most of them come in a starving condition, but those who come in late will be better provided for as there are stores established on the other side of the mountains and the Cities are sending out help to them.* They who came this year came with too little & we with too much. 80 I prefer to be among the latter crowd as I was--Vanbergen Starks Beecher George Lemon and

several others are in from Madison but I have not heard of Doct. Woodruff Wash Bird--Lull or the others but most likly they are in. Wages are very low plenty of men can be hired for \$100 per month and some are willing to work for less. The new comers are generally down-in-the-mouth and d--d the country heartily Would gladly go back if they had money. Now I do not think any worse of the country than I did when I first came here but I think the chances poor for many to make suden fortunes still some are making fortunes mining within sight of our house that I know the men and I know 500 who do not make much more than a decent living. I as you may know by this time have not made any thing scince last spring nor will I if this river does not fall soon so that we can get into the bed. It will be late, but I think there is no danger but that we will get a months work in the stream and if it will pay we can put on a great number of men and work it out in a short time although some are getting discouraged I am now as confident as before of making something and if I am disappointed I have other strings to my bow Ed has entered into Partnership with a young man from Baltimore named McKensie and bought a tavern stand all furnished on the Calivarias [Calaveras] river forty miles from Stockton and from what I can hear they will do well we are all three still Partners--and have some property on hand but not much ready money--we have about \$1000 worth of horses and mules which have not cost much and I have here with me a fine riding mule with Mexican

FORDING LARAMIE CREEK

81 saddle and bridle worth two hundred dollars.* Ben has been here for two days with Vic Seaman and Bill Rasdall. Ben has been Mining and has about \$500. he left for the city to see about bringing up a stock of goods to this place, if he succeeds in geting them I shall manage the store and he will haul goods and I know we can make money. I can tell you in my next whether I am a Merchant or a working Man One of the firm of Wilson George & Fairchild has rig[ged] to be tavern keeper prehaps the others had better rig also to be Marchants. One of our men went into the river on our claim and prospected the dirt which payed fivety cents to the pan full which is first rate dirt--if we can get a months work in such dirt as that it is all I ask. Sarah you say you shall look for me by next October but I am very sorry to write you will look in vain as I have fully determined if I think I can *live* here to stay until I get a *pile* --still every body tells me that I ought to go home poor for ever

leaving and I feel like telling them *go to [the] Devil* for I would not for ten thousand dollars have stayed at Madison and lost what I have seen, and although the trip and my life here is not calculated to polish my manners or improve my morals still I shall take care not to run down hill so far that I can again stand on the same footing (which you say was good, I don't know) as when I left. I guess you think so too. Ike Beecher and George Lemon are living with us--All of the Madison boys and Brooks are well but none but Brooks made any thing nor do I think they ever will if they do not quit running around the country--Rasdall is now talking of buying into a company who are 82 daming the river just below and may do well he has spent all of his money he made last winter--about \$1500, I do not know of any thing else that will interest you but will write again soon Give my love to all and let every body keep a stiff upper lip. the Girls in peticular Always consider me on the top of the morning and never any thing but on hand with my pockets full of rocks also consider me Your Friend. . . .

See John Steele, *Across the Plains in 1850* (Chicago, 1930), for an account of the over-mountain stores. One of his Civil War letters indicates that he brought the saddle home five years later. He speaks of his purpose to do so in his letter of November 13, 1850.

E.B. Do not think of coming here next spring--

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Puritan Camp South Fork Sept 1850 Having an oppertunity of sending home a letter, by our townsman Kavanaugh I do so, although I should not Write at present, but I should wait untill I see whether I have any letters from you in the last mail, from which I have not recieved any returns still I would not have him go home from so near me and not carry a word from me. I wrote you a sheet in answer to E. B.'s & Sister's of June 18th about three weeks scince and scince that have learned nothing of much interest which I can offer you. I hate to have ally from Madison go home with their piles & leave me here poor as Job's Turkey & still I am glad to see some from there do well and will bring up with them on the last quarter if I possibly can. I will relate to you how I am "fixed." You know by my former letters that I entered a company to turn this river which, by reason of the water not falling as usual has proved a failure for this season, this has used up most three months. Brooks has his dam just below us and if the water had fallen he would 83 have backed water all over us seeing that we could not do anything next season without that dam being away we tried to get our company to buy it, but they would not, so twelve of us

(our Co.) went to Brooks and bought the upper part of his claim and dam, for which we payed \$2500, and are now engaged diging a race to turn the water off of it to work, it never having been worked and I think it will pay well as part has been worked and payed fifty dollars a day to the man. I have every confidence that it will pay and besides we have now some certainty of working our first claim next season. My health has been pretty good, although I have not been able to work much as my shoulders and back trouble me some. I shall come out strait when it gets cooler. The fact is I'm too lazy to do much hard work and if there ever was hard work this is. Would'nt you like to see me swinging the pick & shovell well Kavanaugh can tell you how I look and whether I do it up workman like or not, but of course you know I do it up Brown I recieved a letter from Ed. yesterday, he is well says business is rather dull but doing as well as he could expect. He is now building a good frame house for winter business and will probably spend all the money we have in doing so & geting the house stocked for winter so you see although we have a little yet we are poor for ready money if not so I would surely send home some by K--Ed's partner McKensie was attacked one night by 3 spaniards who knocked him down and attempted to rob him but he resisted so bravly they were obliged to give over. There are good winter digings all around his house and I may possibly go there and mine this winter. I told you in my last that I might be "marchant" by this time but 84 Ben. found that he could not get a team to suit him and did not, but by this time he has probably got one and will haul goods untill the rainy season comes. he is well and in good spirits always although he has had the Devils own luck scince his arrival here but I hope like me he will bring up on the last quarter. He has recieved nothing from Madison for sometime. I was over to Placerville or Hangtown last week and saw Sumner and son of Baraboo but none others from Wis. they are well I have not heard of Woodruffs Old Baxter is here or on his way here with his wife. It was not untill I was obliged to that I gave up going home this fall. the reason why was that I started from home with the fixed intention, in my own mind, [of] returning now and have thought I could do so all summer with a pile but it is only hope defered to think so now and in fact I do not know that I would go if I had money but stay and make more. I think as Eliab does better give a few years to *my golden God* now than run the chance of living a poor *cuss* all my life, and I say again I shall stick and hang untill I have the pile if my health is good. Ben. swears he never will return without something worth while and I glory in his spunk. Kavanaugh has done well and if I

was just such a man as him I could be certain of making a good sum this winter. We have had two rainy days last week for which we were not prepared living as we are in a brush house with nothing to keep water off. I lay and took it all one night but thanks to my thick blankets did not get wet. The emigrants of this year do not find things just as nice as they expected and many curse the day they ever started. still if they will work hard and steady they can all make money. but they are not very well 85 satisfied with small wages and are inclined to run around just as we before them have done to our sorrow and they will learn so--Many who had the means did not stop long but toddled for home as fast as possible I have not heard of any badgers doing so as yet. I would like to send some specimens I have gathered for you all but the ore [is] all with Ed. and I cannot. Ed has one for Father or as he says the "Old Tad," and a beauty it is too for a Breast Pin and I hope to see it on that breast under which beats the kind heart of my Father soon Give my love to all reserving a share for your selves and expect soon to hear again from. . . .

To J. C. Fairchild and Family South Fork October 18th 1850

Mr Brooks being about to start home I take the oppertunity of sending this by him and although I have nothing very strang or interesting to give you yet, I would not have him go to Madison with out some word from me. I have been in good health scince my last which I sent by Kavanaugh, which you have recieved ere this. I have not recieved any letters from you scince June 18th although you have written several, I suppose, but there is such a rush for the Post office at Sacramento City that it is almost impossible to get any one to call for me, yet I hope soon to recieve somthing--I have been at work every day scince my last diging races & making Dams all of which are for nothing as near as I can "Kalkerlate"--I wrote you before that I with eleven others bought a portion of Brook's claim in the 86 river. We dug our race and built the Dam "all right & tight" and should have been at work in three hours more when the river rose and come over our dam a stream three feet deep which tore our Dam & race all to "--" the water then went down at the end of a week and we dug our race out again and made our Dam all right last week having several hired men working for us all of the time. scince then we have been at work but have not yet got our money back and stand a poor show to.

With all these reverses I have not made anything and in fact am behind considerable, still, I do not feel discouraged and think I will be on hand with my pockets full of rocks

I shall stay here untill we get our job finished and then shall go South where Ed is and winter he says we can make money mining this winter and board with him. Ben is here with me at present he has been unwell for a few days but is getting well again he will probably write to John T. by Mr. Brooks--He will go South and we will winter together & I hope we shall make something--Next summer I shall come back and work our old claim if I do not sell to go[od] advantage which I shall do if I have the opportunity and let all river Damming go to the *Deville* for the future as I think from what I have seen there is but very little to be made at it even if you have good luck--Ed is doing very well he writes having built a frame house and is now getting in his winters stock of provision layed in--All of the Madison boys have got in as Brooks will tell you and he can tell you all of the particulars better than I can I think Doct Woodruff threw away those things you sent [with] them or if not 87 I shall not see him in a long time and perhaps never--Bartlett is sitting beside me having come from Hangtown, where he is living, on a visit. Vic Seaman is on the Cossumnis river near where we wintered, he intends wintering in our old cabin and put a ferry across the river, he may make money out of it but I doubt it much--If C-- comes to Madison be very careful and [do] not trust him for he is a thief and villain as I can prove to you--I have never recieved a single paper but I believe Seaman got some of mine out of the office.

I do not think there will be so many fools next year come across the plains or come to this country any way. Those who come this year have lowered thier calculations some and will have to lower them some more still before they get their piles--I have no pile set but you can bet your life I will never come home untill I have something more than when I started

Cash, I hear some very bad stories about you from the boys who come through this year, they say you are getting to be "some" after the girls & the girls *some* after you "Go it cripples, wooden-legs [are] cheap," I expect you will be taking to yourself a rib before I get back Oh! Lo--Libby [Lottie] I suppose is getting to be a great young 'un and will be somewhat bigger before I see the little dear again. I hear all who come from home this season praising the new brick [house]. I am glad you

have all such a nice home and hope to help you enjoy it some time after next year, you must enjoy it a little extra once-in-awhile for me and I will try and put in a few extra licks at the Brush house for you. If I can pass as happy a winter and make as much, as I did last I shall feel satisfied and I will try and not get behind another summer. 88 The weather is getting cold and we have had several hard rains and I think it will not be long before the rains set in in good earnest and I begin to wish for them too for I am tired of this place and want to get where I can make something--

There is a good deal of sickness among the emigration of this year, the prevailing disease is the dysentary but if it is taken in time it is not dangerous. A young man from Racine died at Coloma [Coloma] last week named A. Raymond he was a fine fellow and I miss him much. He was calculating to start home soon but was cut off.

Remember me to all of my friends and tell all that I will be with them *arter while* if I live & I know I'll do that Don't you--Ben says "give my best respects to the Old Tadd" and all the family, All the Boys cry, me the same, me the same, & I cry Me the same too Your[s] Truly. . . .

I will write soon again.

Direct to Sacramento city as usual--

To His Father Willow Spring Nov. 13th 1850 Calevaras County I write you from here for the first time although I have been here nearly a month but have not been situated so that I could write with any comfort untill now. I wrote by A. E. Brooks & also by Cavanaugh both of which you have probably recieved. I left the South Fork last Month and went to Sacramento City to get those things which you sent by Doct. Woodruffe but could not find them, they not being where he said he left them.

LARAMIE PEAK

89 I am fearfull that I shall never get them but never mind I shall be home before you all grow out of my mind and memory. While in the city I made many enquires after Steele but could not find him he had been there but I suppose had left.

The cholera was very bad while I was at Sacramento and is growing worse the[re] is none in the mines at all nor do I think there will be as it is getting very cold.

Ed. has got a most beautiful place having built a fine large frame house two stories high and finished off inside in good style. On the first floor is the Bar room & Dining room and a large log kitchen in the rear now building--The Bar is one of the finest in the country presenting an abundant supply of all kinds of fine Licquors Sardienes Oysters Cigars & in short every thing found in any bar in the country

The table is not beat by any house on the road neither for variety or cooking and would compare well with some of the Hotells of Madison if not beat them. Sleeping accomadations, the Soft side of the floor. The windows are all finly curtained with that piece of mosquito net I brot from home I have been very peticular in discribing the house because I am proud of it and so are all of us and you would all praise Ed's good taste and management if you could see it. Ed put the whole concern up with the help of one hand and I tell you it is built in a *Shoemakerly maner*. Ed. owns one half of the concern which is now valued with the contents at nine thousand dollars and although the firm Wilson George & *Little one* have had most miserable bad luck the past summer, they are ahead of the hounds about \$5000.00 and by next fall will be three times as much ahead I hope although I do not expect it

90

Ben and I are intending to mine here this winter & board with Ed & McKensie they only charge us the cost of the provisions I think we can very easily make 8 or 10 hundred dollars apiece, we shall go to throwing up dirt soon as there is no water to wash with now in the ravines. We have been helping Ed fix up things for winter.

We have got our plans all laid for next summers operations and if nothing happens to cause us to change then, we shall pursue them thus. I am to go on to the South Fork by the first of June to meet the Daming Co. with which I am connected to commence our work and Ben will take our team and

haul a stock of good[s] up there which I will sell and hire a man to work in my place in the river Ed. if he does not meet with a good opportunity to sell out will remain here and keep the house warm.

We shall go into no large operations without we have the money and at any rate keep within our means. I think if we succeed in getting the wheel in motion we can make enough to satisfy us by next fall, as that is the time we have set to go home. if we have our pile, but if not God only knows when we will go. We have one consolation we are ahead of all the Madison boys who came last year, except B--, and he acted the *D--D rascal* for part of his, while we, so far. have got ours honestly--

Nov 24th I can give no excuse for not finishing this except that the spirit has not moved me to write, and waiting for items to pop into this head of mine. My health is as good as ever it was, with a good prospect of its continuing so.

We have got Ed's Kitchen done, and are now prepared to go at mining, for the winter. I have been at 91 work with Bill Rasdall the last week, throwing up dirt in a gulch near by. I happened to go out prospecting with him, and we found a good place, paying [50 cts?] to the panfull, so I could do no better than go to work with him, as Ben was at work here, on the house. The rains have set in good earnest I think, as it has been raining, almost every day, for a week. Business has been good for some time the house being full every night. Vic Seaman came here last night from Sacramento City, he is intending to winter near by here. he has recieved several letters from home latly while the rest of us have not recieved any thing scince last Summer, where my letters have gone, I cannot immagine, for I am certain you have written many, and I am getting very anctious to hear from you, for I do not know that you all escaped the cholera. I sometimes think that it carried some of those I love away and a death-like [feeling] comes over me. My greatest wish is that I may die before any of you. There is no thought worse, than that I shall lose some one of those in whose life mine is bound up, then all beyond looks blank & dark but I do not give way to these sad thoughts and [am] the same trifling, light-hearted fool I used to was and shall probably always remain so and never be fit to do anthing that requires any head work--but so we go--I am still keeping up my journal but it

[is] not very interesting neither to me nor anybody else but I think I will continue it as long as I stay in the country as it may be of some benefit to me and also interesting for us to read in after years

I have lost my fancy riding mule it proving to be anothers and had been stolen last summer I have still one very fine one and Ben has three. I will bring 92 home, if I ever have the luck to get home, a saddle and Bridle that will astonish the natives and if I could I would bring a fancy horse. The *Greasers* have some magnificent horses and trapings although they look very clumsy to us when first seen--for example--the spurs I wear are eight inches long with a wheel twice the size of a dollar You would think I was a madman to see me riding through the Streets of Madison with them on.

I recieve the Argus as regular as I can get word to the P.M. and shall look for some letters next week. Charlie write me a long letter, and all of you pour them on thick and fast, Don't be afraid of boreing me with them--Cash you must write to Ben and Ed it will be a favor to them and me, tell us all the small news afloat. Give my respects to all enquiring friends at home--also to Libby Gordon, Hatty Dean & Franky Smith. Wish Gen. Ruggles and Bride much joy for me I remain Your Friend. . . .

24th The Cholera has disappeared from Sac[ramento] City and other Places--Pro Bono Publico

Love to the Little one. I have got a piece of gold for a pin for her--Poketempo

To His Father Willow Spring Caleveras Co. Nov 23d--50 I deem it necessary to give you a statement of my affairs with Mr A. E. B-- as he may not tell both sides of the story. He as you know had his dam just below our claim which backed water all over us and we knowing that if the Dam was put up next year it would stop us from turning the river next year, we concluded, 93 twelve of us, to take him up at his offer he had made us, which was this, He would sell us the Dam and race known as the Quincy Dam &c. for \$2,500, \$1,000, down and the ballance as soon as we got it out of the river, but if we did not get it out of the river we were only to pay \$1,000 more, that is \$2,000 in all, we gave him two notes one for \$1,000 and one for \$500.00 both Payable when [we] got [it] out of the river and he gave us a bill Of Sale of it which provided that if we did not pay according to agreement the Dam and race would revert back to him. We gave him a document which amounted

to this We--the companies named--gave to A.E.B-- , K-- , & E.O. McG-- to notes--describing them-- and if said notes are not payed as specified there in them the Dam, riffle and race revert to B-- , K-- McG without Let or hindrance. This document he would not show to any of us before a witness nor would he acknowledge that he had any Such document except to one of us alone. I asked him for a copy of it but he refused it. He told us that the river had not been worked but very little and advised me to go into the opperation as a friend. The Notes read *we or either of us promise to pay &c.* so that any one of us are responsible for the whole. After turning the river we found that it was all worked out last year except a small piece out of which we took about \$1,700.00 which made both notes due, but we were so well satisfied that he had acted the rascal with us that we would not pay him, but sent our treasurer to him and offered him the whole concern as per agreement in the bill of sale, but he said that he did not want it, nor was he obliged to take it by the document, that it only gave him the priviledge of doing so, but did not force him to do so. Mind you he would not let this document be 94 seen by any disinterested man. I was talking over the subject, with him, after we had told him we could not pay him, and he said to me "I feel all the friendship of a neighbor for you Lucius and do not wish to hurt a hair of your head You are out of the scrape on account of your not being of age and if you were not out I would let you out, *You are just where I wanted you.* I wanted you where I could rest my gun on your shoulder and fire at the rest, I knew that your signature was good for nothing when you made it, but just as soon as you get in Madison I shall commence suit against you and through you summons all of the rest of the Co. to appear at Madison, but I will give you a receipt for your share which you can produce in court, if I can do so by law, if not you can plead the Baby Act" Do you notice that he had me where he wanted me from the start which proves that he knew that he was selling the claim for what it was not. Do not let him coax you to pay a cent on my account as he has now \$1,000 more than the claim was worth and I shall not pay him anything nor will the rest. If I can plead the Baby Act I will do so, but if you are at all responsible for me do not let him ring in on you. The rest of the company will never bc able to pay him nor will they untill they are obliged by law and not then if they can get their property out of their hands so that the whole brunt of the affair will fall on me alone which I am not disposed to stand. Enough of this affair--only that you may rest assured that I am not at all mistaken when I tell you that he has acted the D--D rascal with me and the Co. If you are responsible by law for any of my actions

or signatures send me the papers which release you, for I would not in any way embarrass you 95 while here I do not write thus because I have any fears of it, but I may be caught by accident in a snap and I would not have you suffer by it on any account. Thank God, I can pay B-- the whole, and then have some left. Do not let him know that I have written as I want to get the receipt of him if I can.

Ed. is a going to write to George Pain who is his agent to get Money of you out of the School fund to take up the Mortgage on the U. S. Hotell^{*} and will give George Pain authority to give you a mortgage or the security of the same anything you can do to accomodate Ed. would be a favor to me as well as him Ed has not recieved a word about his business and does not know how it is getting on, tell George to write him an account of it as he is getting very anctious. He would Send the money but all we have is invested here so that that amount cannot be used without inconvenience to us--

The Wisconsin school fund, created through the sale of a portion of the sixteenth sections, was handled by a commission of which the state treasurer, then Jairus C. Fairchild, was the leading member. The state wanted to secure an income through the investment of these funds on good mortgage security.

Ben and Ed send their respects to you and all of their friends. Tell Dave Dickson to write them and me I will write again soon until then I remain Your affectionate Son. . . .

To William A. Childs Willow Spring Caleveras Co. Nov. 24th 1850. It is nearly two years scince I have written you and I know not wheather you are dead or alive but I *recon* you are alive and kicking so I will give you a brief account 96 of my doings scince I left America. I shall not blame you if you discard me from your list of friends, although I should be very much grieved to have you do so, still, after my treatment to you, you have the right to do it if you will, but when you think of the little Tow beaded Brat you used to play with I know you will pardon me and write an answer to this poor excuse for a letter.

I arrived in this Country on the 9th of October /49 and wintered on the Cosumnes river 40 miles from Sacramento City, where I done first rate. My Partner, Edwin R. George of Madison and I dug about three thousand dollars, We lived, Eight of us in a cabin all alone away from every body,

being five miles from any house and I tell you we had fine times doing nothing, eating, drinking, Playing cards & Smoking--You see I say nothing about work, it rained so hard all winter that we did nothing but sit in the cabin untill spring when we went to work and made money as fast as I wish to untill we dug the best of the bar out. In June I went on to the South Fork of the American Fork of the Sacramento river and joined a company for the purpose of turning the river and working the bed We worked all summer, but the water not going down as low as usual we did not succeed in geting into it and I found my self this fall minus a hard Summers work and about \$600, in the regular dust George turned the Cosumnes river and did not make any thing so that we have had all around most d--d bad luck. George opened a house last July and has scince built a fine two story frame house and finished it of[f] in good style we are partners in it. I have been here about a month and find it a good comfortable place

THE BLACK HILLS

97 to live, after living 18 months and cooking for myself and sleeping in brush houses. I am mining and shall do so all winter You ought to see me swing the pick. I can do it up in *Shoemakerly maner* and keep up my end with any set of hands in the country. I cannot give you a more detailed account of my goin's in & coming's out here this time but will give them to you by piece meals as I do not intend to let you rest undisturbed so long in [the] future.

I have often, often thought of you here and many nights have you appeared in my dreams looking as you used to at Freeze's I look back to those days as the happiest of my happy life all of my boyish playmates are dear to me but among the number you are the dearest, prehaps some of the Petticoats stand ahead, but I think not, but I think they have the right too when the time comes--Don't you? I am calculating to return to Wisconsin next fall if I am not disappointed in my calculation and the first thing I [will] do after shaking hands with my friends will be to toddle for Cleveland as fast as God will let me, when I hope to find you all right and tight. I do not know what to say for all of my acquaintces so many changes have probably taken place and I can only ask you to give me a good long letter telling me all about them. I have written once to Byron Harris but have not recieved any answer as yet. When I wrote to him I intended to write you at the same time but was hindered by my work I recieved a letter from Miss Gordon who you know spent last winter with my Fathers

family and wrote her at Cleveland but have not recieved an answer. If you have an oppertunity tell her as [she] may not have recieved it. Give my love to all [of] your Brothers 98 and other members of your family an[d] the Girls if any are in Cleveland Hatty Sargent, Ha [?] Stead- man and those two pretty ones you mentioned in one of your former letters remember me to the boys t[oo]

Make up your mouth for a fancy *pin Gold* from m[e] when I return and you will not be disappointed. If [you] are making a good living with any prospect for the f[uture] do not come out here as you will be woefully dissappointed remember that advise and remember me as Your true Friend. . . .

Direct leters to Sacramento City Sac. Co. Cal.

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Willow Spring Cal[averas] Co. Dec. 24th 1850 It being about my time to write, I do so not that I have anything new or strange to tell you only I feel as though I should feel more at ease and better satisfied with myself after I have written you. This is the second Christmas I have spent away from you and I hope it will be the last but I am afraid that I will not get home by next It seems to me as though I had been away from home ten times as long as I have but when I get back the time will seem short enough. We are agoing to have a Christmas dinner tomorrow and while eating it we will think of you. There has been but little rain not enough to wash with and we have been throwing up dirt all of the time. but we want water badly as we can get no money untill it comes The miners in this section are geting hard up and if they do not get a chance to make somthing soon I do not know what they will do, I have made but \$25--scince I came here 3 99 months. but I have about 4000 buckets of dirt prepared to wash, which will yield something.

I Bought an ox team, three yoke and wagon which Ben. is agoing to drive on the road between here and Stockton as long as the roads will admit it. I gave five hundred dollars for the team and for the first time in my life. went on credit. A team will clear themselves in & month and then we can make more teaming than we can mining. The distance to Stockton from here is fivety miles and Ben gets Eight dollars per hundred 25 hundred is a load so you see that it will pay very good wages and I think it will pay well all next summer I do not know what to say about home maters

as I have not received any letters from you since last June, therefore I do not know what changes have taken place nor what you are doing whether you are alive and well or otherwise. I am getting very anxious indeed, but I know that you are writing all of the time or I assure you I would not trouble myself I cannot imagine where my letters are. I only know that I do not get any nor does Ben or Ed. and they too are getting to think that their friends have forgotten them but I suppose they too are writing and the letters are miscarried. If they could get a letter it would do me a great deal of good as I could hear of you.

There are Eight thousand French in the mines who were sent here by the French government to work here, they were the Guard de Noble of Paris and for their services were sent here a[t] the expence of the government. The Americans do not like it and in Mokelomie [Mokelumne] Co. they have given them (the French) notice to leave or fight. At San an Dres [Andreas] one mile from here, there are a[s] many and 100 I think there will be trouble soon between us. They are all well armed and live and travel in military style having their officers Music Flags &c. with them Its a shame that our government will allow themselves to be run over by the off scourings of all Gods creation who are taking the bread out of the American miners mouths, or the Gold which is the same. Both the American and Naturalized foreigners are greatly dissatisfied about it.* I think that all foreigners who had declared their intentions previous to the admission of this state are all who should be allowed to dig a dollar and I hope Congress will pass such a law.

H. H. Bancroft, *History of California*, vi, 374, mentions French Camp, in Calaveras County but he nowhere speaks of a French military aggregation in that region.

There is a report that Brooks his two sons and others of the Company are dead but it is so roundabout and vague that I do not give it much credit. I only know that on board the Brig Christiana a great number died with the Cholera he was on board of her I also heard that the Captain had thirty thousand dollars in his hands belonging to Brooks. You will probably of [have] heard something definite before you recieve this but if not, I would not alarm his family. I believe that some of them are dead and on that the report has been raised. Vanbergen does not deserve to be well off for acting as he did here, getting discouraged when there was nothing to discourage him at all so he put off home. If I had been in his place I would have died before going back without making a trial for

a fortune, but after giving the country a fair trial and s[eeing no] chance for making money fast I do not blame a man, so I think by next fall I shall have given it a good *rip* (and God 101 knows I've done my best) then if I have not that Pile I shall begin to think that I have no chance, now I think my chance good but I may be mistaken as I have been many times before but, If at first I don't succeed, I'll try, try, again.

Ed's Business has been dull of late yet he is doing something. Only think! in three days I'll be nineteen years old and you Father Forty Nine, how time flies Yet I think this is a pleasant world and my life so far has been happy, Sometimes I feel ready to burst with very happiness and you though far away are the cause of it, only thinking of you is happiness enough for one common mortal and if I could think that I am as dear to you as you are to me I believe I should burst with a sound like a pop gun--

Remember me to all of my acquaintances and believe me Your Friend. . . . Kiss the little one for me--

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Willow Spring house Sunday March 19th 1851 For nearly a year I have been waiting, and not very patiently, when the express arrived, and nothing for me. but oftener with an oath, not for you, but for the Mails.

But this morning I was rewarded for all my trouble by the receipt of your letters Dated Nov. 11 & 29 & Sarah's of Nov. 17th. I have never recieved a letter in the country which pleased me as much except the first I am very sorry to hear of your sickness, and hope that long ere this, you are perfectly well. Poor little 102 Charlie. My arm aches for him, he is, and has been, the most unfortunate boy, for falls and bruises, in the world, but then, by this time, he is perfectly well, and probably forgot his misfortune in the pleasures of Boyhood, happy time? Make the most of it Charlie, for you will find the world much more unpleasant than the school and play ground, not that I have found anything very dark as yet, but I have seen many, many, person[s] who have, & passed through darker ones than I ever want to see.

For my part I think this quite a nice world, and one that I could enjoy myself [in] to my hearts content, if I had the *tin*, which I hope to have *soon*. I have not written to you for some time in consequence of not recieving anything from you, nor did any of the other boys get any word from which I could glean that you were all well even, Not that I for a moment thought that you had failed to write, but I have got so disappointed in not recieving letters, when I fully expected them, that I could not write, and in fact I had not much to write about. But for news--I have been at work with Bill Rasdall all winter for two months we have been doing well, making from one to three ounces per day--most of the time we have kept three hired men at work, for five dollars a day and make good wages for our Selves off of thier work, besides what we make ourselves. Yesterday we had taken out of the hole *two thousand* dollars, of which about eight hundred and fivty a piece is clear. *and in our bags* --We have still over a months work in the same hole, which will pay as well as heretofore. but we have worked very hard, even to a proverb. going to work before Sunrise every morning, and stoping after he had set in the evening 103 harder than I shall ever work again, after I work this hole out--I have been sick for the past week, but not confined to my bed or the house, only a slight Billious attack, of which I am very nearly recovered, but [may] probably work a little to Morrow if strong enough. although I have not worked my hired man made over his wages the good sum of ninty nine (\$99) dollars, which I had the pleasure of puting in the old bag saying, *one more step nearer home*. I've a ladder to climb, every round of which [is] one hundred dollars, in dust in the bag, I've climbed up as high as eight, how many more I have to do I'll not tell you, now, but I think them within reach next fall cirtain, others around us are doing well. but only one other pair does as well as we have because they do not work as hard, nor to so good advantage, which counts almost as much as the work.

Bill is the best miner I have seen in the country, and one of the best partners in that business I could have got. It has worn me down, as it always has, working so hard and constant, I'm nothing but a shadow of a boy but I feel better when I am as *poor as a crow* than otherwise if I am at work, as the heat does not effect me as much.

You must never expect me to be a parlor ornament at home, or a fancy clerk in the store, or anything else that I know of, except saw wood & that I know I won't do. Ed has a Mrs. Randall from Vermont keeping house for him. She is a very nice woman and has got the

Prettiest little girl 4 mo. old, I ever saw. it [is] a general pet of all the miners around. Her husband lives with us & is making money fast mining. You can't imagine 104 how much more comfortable it is to have a good woman around. the Bar room, formily a rowdy room as you know we must be to some extent here, is now as quiet as any house in the states, and we have become more civil and manerly, which I know you will rejoice in, I know--Do not think that because we and a few others are doing well and geting money fast, that all are doing so, not by any means. I can't repeat it too many times, *that it is very uncirtain so much so that no one should leave a comfortable livelihood to come here*, tell everybody so who think of coming, I would not if back again and know what I do now, come out here, but now I am here, I will have neck-or-nothing. I have been more lucky than the great majority.

Our company commence operations, on the South Fork^{*} the 1st of April, and I think we shall succeed in getting the river dry as there has been but very little rain which will cause the water to fall early and low. I shall not be able to get there, as soon as that, but shall hire a hand, and put in my place, which I shall in fact keep one there all Summer, having Concluded not to work any more in this life--ain't that wise ?--I think it better to dig in others pockets, than in the ground--Don't you? I am intending to open an eating house & Bar on the South Fork in company with one Jackson and G. Carr--They have teams and money, while they think I have none so I am to furnish no capital, Only my time. It is a good chance and I can make money. They have a great opinion of my business talent, and want me with them bad. I'm afraid they will be disappointed. I am heartily tired of hard work and will quit it for the future.

South Fork of American River. See *post* 117, letter of September 22, 1851.

UPPER CROSSING OF PLATTE

I am very glad to hear of the arrival of Cavanaugh at home & hope he may live long to enjoy his wealth. Brooks I have written you before, is dead according to the best evidence we can hear, how many more I do not know--perhaps all--[A mistake. Brooks came home.]

You have always kindly expressed much confidence in me, and I assure you I am proud to hear it, it shall be a spur to me, to be more worthy of it, and your respect. I am glad & happy that Parmilio could give so good a report of me. There never will be a worse one while I retain my wits. Parmilio did not make anything here not being able to stand the labor it requires to get the *ore* --

I have been sadly troubled with one of my teeth which Dr. Miner filled, the filling has come out leaving the nerve bare, if I do not get relief Soon I shall go to Stockton and have it filled--I recieved a letter from Dr. Woodruffe last week telling me that you were all well. He has not been able to find the packet you sent by him to me, and probably never will, the man with whom he left it having died with the Cholera--

I also recieved a letter from Byron Harris, Cleveland, which gave me the first hint of your well being, he having seen Sarah in Cleveland, and I concluded that she would not be off on a pleasure trip if all was not well at home--Sarah's letter written from C-- I have not recieved but will probably get it one of these days better late than never

March 31st--It is two years today scince I rode the Pony out of Madison, & from all I hold dear on Earth, What changes have taken place scince then, in my course of life, Then I was a happy innocent boy and now I ain't much worse only I would like to 106 exchange back again. The past two years have been the longest of my life. It seems as though I have lived ten years in them and I probably have seen and learned more than I would in M[adison] in that time. I hope ere another passes I shall see my self seated in the old family circle, with none missing--

I have entirely recovered [from] my illness and have been at work untill to day--we are still doing well & will do so for about two more weeks when we shall start for the American river, to make our

pile--The house is doing good business and making some money--McKinsie is mining and Ed has a man at work for him. both are making money.

I have written to Count Harasthy giving him a copy of the Draft and your remarks concerning it telling him that if he could not get the money to me sooner, I should call at San Diego on my way home, next fall, and recieve it. I think from what I have heard that he is able to pay it.

It has been raining for several days, & yesterday it snowed for about three hours as hard as I ever saw it in Wisconsin, but now it [is] all past and it is as warm and pleasant as spring. The climate hitherto so unchangfull is now as fitfull as any country I ever was in, now cold, now warm, now windy & now still, all this in a few hours.

I do not like the climate neither summer nor winter although Many go wild in praise of it both here and in the states--Every body in the States who have friends here, are always writing for them to *come home*. Now they all may long heartily to go, it is hard to leave, prehaps, when they have not made much money, or are engaged in business, by leaving which, they will lose all they have made, or they may have some mining operation in view by which they are confident of making a fortune. This is my ease and the case of thousands of others, as soon as a man fails in one operation, he is bolting into another, in doing which he thinks to hasten his return home while in many eases he is prolonging it, business and mining being so uncertain, on the above doctrine I shall finish the business and mining next fall, and if, from both, I have made anything worth while I shall not enter into any more schemes, but, if not God help me.

It is hard for a man to leave here, where there is so much money made, with nothing, still clinging to the hope that he will strike it soon he hangs on untill he spends what little he has and is then forced to stop, this I know to be the case in many instances.

I have not heard from the Madison people latly nor do I know where many of them are--Sutherland & Cadwise are keeping Hotell in San Diego I saw a man who stoped with them latly.

Will you please give Dave Dickson & John T Wilson & George Paine a dressing for not writing to some of we *hombres*. I can't think they have forgotten us,

Why didn't you set some one on Libby Gordon so that we would have her in Madison, though, I don't know that there is any one there who can appreciate her as she deserves, I'll put things right, when I get my carcass among you, in that line. Won't I though & wait till I get that terable pair of whiskers I'se gwine to have--

I sincerely hope, dear Father, that your hopes for next fall will be realized--It will be a proud and happy time for me and one I think I shall see.*

Probably referring to his father's gubernatorial aspirations, which failed of fulfillment.

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Your account of the business is very bright and when I cannot do as well, or better, I should say, I will return home and take my old stand behind the counter and do the agreeables to the ladies assuring them that "I warrent it not to fade, pure indigo" Tell me how you have the store arranged Cash, and in fact, every little thing no matter how small it may seem to you I assure you it interests me greatly--all write often so that I shall stand some chance of getting one at least once in two or three months, You Dear Mother let me see your good old writing once more and Charlie too & E B & Cash & all even Rover, if you could realize one half the pleasure which a letter gives me I know you would make every effort to let me get one.

Hurrah for Senator Dean? I congratulate you Brother Eliab on your honor, I am both surprised and glad to hear of it. I should like to see how you look in the Senate chamber among the wise heads of the State, no doubt you make a very respectfull appearance, and when you are to make a grand speach what a crowd of Fairchilds there will be to hear the bursts of eloquence.* I ought to be there to give you a little spokeshave* for you to copy by--

E. B. Dean Jr., of Madison, was state senator during one session, that of 1852. In 1855 he became receiver of the United States Land Office at Superior.

"Spokeshave" can hardly mean, in this connection, the draw-knife of the wheelwright; but would seem to be a miner's colloquialism for a finished bit of speaking.

You had better get some office Cash, and I will, when I get back, if I can get the necessary number of votes--but my paper and Ideas are failing fast but never will my love for you all Yours. . . .

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Give my respects to Mr & Mrs Lord I think of them often. * Address all letters and papers to Ben. Ed & myself Coloma El. Dorado County Cal[ifornia]

Charles Lord, a highly respected citizen of Madison who was a charter member and the recording secretary of the State Historical Society.

I wish Cash not to get married before I get back, for Ed and [I] are very anxious to dance at his wedding, what he will never do at mine

Introduce me to Sen Dean with my compliments

Remember me to Uncle Frank and family, also to good old grandmother Blair and Grandfather too, God Bless their old souls, also the other friends in Ohio--I have written Aunt Sophia [?] once but it may not have reached her.

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Queen City Hotel Sact City May 11th 1851-- Ahem! I don't know how to commence this to suit you or myself, but I'll try--I left the Calaveras Four weeks ago to go to the South Fork of American as I wrote you I should but have never succeeded in reaching my destination I arrived here and found Mr. Geo. E Graves of Cottage Grove keeping this house in company with a Mr. Seward and of course we put up with him. his partner (Seward) not liking the business wish fed] to get out of it so I at Mr. Graves request looked into the matter and concluded to take his place.

I put in one thousand dollars and Graves has in about three hundred & to off set my surplus capital he charges nothing for the services of his wife daughter and son who do most of the work and I charge no 110 interest, this at the going wages is very much in my favor. We rent the house at \$525, for the first four months (per month) and add one hundred on for the next four. The house is perfectly new and one of the largest and handsomest buildings in the city, none of your 2 cent

concerns, but a nice fashionable looking house, that attracts every bodies attention as they pass. Our business has been good having the house overflowing every night and it will hold a good many being three stories high partitioned off in small rooms each of which have two small cots in--The furniture cost about \$1500, which will not buy much here. Our rents are about \$100--per day. Last Monday was election day and of all the time you ever heard of that beat them it [is] ten times worse than Cleveland in 1840. The Ladies presented both parties with banners the day before at a grand torchlight procession which they had every night for a week. The polls of the third ward were held in this house we gave them the room for the opportunity of selling them whisky. Our cash account at night was \$200 with a bill of \$100 against the Whig committee, which is good. Of one article sold, was 40 doz bottles soda water, more than any other house has sold this season in one day.

Ed is here with me tending Bar for the firm of Graves & Fairchild although we are still partners. Ben is on the South Fork seeing to our claims which I have great confidence in this season-- I have changed places with Ed all winter he was boss of the ranch south, and [I] had nothing to do with it. Now I am boss, he like unto I was--

Father says to keep my business snug, which I have done as far as I have been able but situated as we are 111 each having his own business to attend to wholly unconnected with the others but still all working together and after plans approved of by the whole in secret while in public each goes his own way after his own will apparently, so that none know of our partnership nor do we wish it known as it often happens that we can work into each others hands as it is when we could not if all was publick. You may think this strange but I have the utmost Confidence in both Ed and B as I think they have in me so that I think we will come out right next fall. There are a great number of Wisconsin men here and many families are coming out this season.

Parson Peniman is here, selling goods at auctions, he did preach but the congregation did not pay him as they agreed to so he “*quot* instanter” saying it did not pay--I cannot hear a word of Steele nor any of my acquaintances who immigrated last summer--

This city has improved wonderfully since last fall and is still going ahead with almost insuperable rapidity but the prices of property are falling continually also rents are falling. You will have heard before this reaches you that San Francisco and Stockton are both burned to the ground The loss to the inhabitants is immense stripping most of them of all they had. I am not acquainted with the places well enough to give you a description of the fire but you will find it in the papers soon--Cash I saw Ance Olin this week for the first time in the country he is well and doing well selling good[s] seventy five miles north of Grass Valley sends his respects to "old Cash"--

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I read you[r] letters with Henry Abby sitting by my side and you will find out that I send these by him without my telling you so as he will see you soon--

I received the reports of the Hon. State Treasurer also Senator Dean's report and I find that the Treasurer has had the extreme pleasure of handling a large amount of money--also that Dean Esqr-- and the Hon. Mr. Booth agree that the State prison should be at Madison whether it is for the same reason or not I know not but should think it was. Ain't that message rich^{*} All the Wisconsin boys are after it. I think I can get your letters more regular now as I have a private box with Ed--

Doubtless referring to the first message of Governor Leonard J. Farwell whose views as a Whig were naturally criticized by the Democratic state officers and their friends. Farwell raised some questions about the treasurer's report.

I received an invitation to a party ten miles from the city on next Monday night and have been intending to go but my eyes are very sore so that I shall have to give it up--To go to a party here it costs about 2 oz. Yours &c. . . .

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Sacramento City Sept. 7th 1851 Queen City Hotel, Room D. You may think strange that I have not written you a letter in nearly two months, Yet it is so, Now you know that I would not neglect you so, without some good reason, Don't you?

When I last wrote you, I was one of the proprietors of the Queen City Hotel, now I write you as a common miner, having thrown off[f] the *Biled Shirt with stood*

INDEPENDENCE ROCK

113 *up collar*, and harnessed myself in my regular old Hickory one. We found, that although we were doing a good business, that we could not make any thing at it, and ill fact, were loseing money every day, So we made all efforts to sell out, and finally on the 18th of last month were successful enough to sell our furniture for two Thousand dollars, which cost us three, still, if we had sold the same furniture at auction, as we should have done, in a few days, it would not have brought over \$1200, I was very well satisfied with the sale, as was Mr. Graves, to make a long story short we got out, and after paying our debts, had as much money as we put in, So that we made only a good living, & the fun of keeping one [of] the best houses in the city.

I was nearly worn out in the house having so much business to attend to and being obliged to sit up very late every night. I became paler than usual and very thin Now [that] I have been out in the country air I feel a hundred per cent better and look more like living than I ever did in my life. I stoped in this city a week after we gave our successor possession and then went up to that regular claim on the South Fork you have heard so much about in which I am as deeply interested as ever and shall probably be so for some time yet as it is pretty certain that we shall not get it worked out this year as we have only now begun to do any thing at getting out gold. The race was dug early in the summer and broke out twice and then the company built a floom or wooden race which carried the water by the break safly. Then a company below backed water on us, and the company built a large circular rotary pump to pump out the back water, which will not do it and then they are now building a Room through the whole length of 114 the claim and probably are at work now if the water has not risen getting out the *ore* by the pound for I assure you it is there if we can ever get it out, I will give you proof of it, the Company worked five days diging last month and the whole proceeds was Eight thousands dollars then they were obliged to stop on account of the water so that you see that I have good grounds for hope actualy I would not give a man fivety dollars to warrant me \$10,000 for my share if we could work it out now, still I may not make one half that in all my

life. I am sanguine that I shall get at least one thousand this fall and next year more *perhaps*. I shall buy all of the shares, I can get reasonable, this fall, and either make or break on it, as you all say, and I believe it, that I am just as welcome without a pile as with it. I am the luckiest dog on earth, in having such a host of good friends at home for every one of you are a host alone, that is, to me.

I am always happy when thinking of you and proud that I am one of the Fairchilds of Madison, when asked by any *badger*, if it is so, Yes, I am actually proud of it, and seem to [be] more in my own eyes when I think of you. still I am very anxious to get a few thousands to carry home to you although Father, God Bless him! says that there is plenty at home for me as well as you all, and when I see no hope for any here, then and only then will I consent to turn homward without some Dust.

Hope is the most prominent Bump on my Cranium, for I never was without it, and I think never shall be. I don't know what the Devil I should do if I was as disparing as some poor fellows are in this country, and I have had as many ups & downs as most boys of my age, 115 some times with plenty of money, and then but little, still, I can say this much for myself, that I never spent but very little for things which I did not need, and that is another thing I have to be proud of, now don't imagine that I am puffed up with self conceit, I only think these things to myself and you. I came to this city yesterday, with the expectation of meeting E. C. Steele here, but he has not yet arrived, nor do I know now when to expect him. I did think of going up to Shasty [Shasta] valley, but I have come to the conclusion to winter down south somewhere.

Sutherland was here last month, I saw him then, for the first time, in this country, he looked fine. Mrs. S. and *baby* are also well. He has sold out his paper and is now [practicing] law at San Francisco. When I arrived at the claims I found a letter which had been directed to Coloma. the first I had recieved in sometime, dated June, and one from Charlie, which pleased me much, to think that little Charlie can write a fine letter is something new to me, I hope I shall henthforth recieve one regular from him. You all write come home, *and I always think come home*, but you know the reasons for my not doing it, and hope you will not think that any other reason keeps me in this country, and yet I must confess that it is the finest country, and climate, in the world, and

if you were all here, I should never wish to leave it, and still while I write this, I know I should have a longing to be in old Madison often. There is not such another country on earth one which presents to every man such an [opportunity] for a poor man to gain an easy livly hood if satisfied with that or a competency if more ambitious and I think that in a few years it will be a great wheat 116 and Barley growing country as it now [is] in some portions. The population will become more stationary and all kinds of business carried on in a more systamatic maner then the state will flourish more than now. Mining is already changing many are engaged in crushing Quartz and thousands daming rivers they are also turning the water out of several rivers and running [it] through portions of the country where there are good gulch digings which will make a vast difference with the miners when they can work all the year when otherwise they could work only a few months of the worst season to mine in. I do not cook for myself as formerly there being a good boarding house near by my work and I can board there nearly as cheap as I can board myself besides I do hate to cook worse than anything in the world. I am as comfortable here as anybody. Ed is well he does not work any nor has he ever worked scince the winter of Forty Nine

Ben is a good miner and works well, he showes himself anctious to make something and I think will, we have now about \$3000 on hand an[d] in property to the amount of 3 more I shall probably send some to you this Fall.

Rasdall is with us still you never saw a man improve as he has he has become a *man* now which is saying a good deal for him. I assure you, I saw Fathers name in a Milwaukie paper as a candidate for Governor Go it! I hope you will get it, though I shall think you just a[s] grand and good if you are not Gov Fairchild as otherwise, still I hope you will get it. I have only had one office in this country as yet that was clerk of election I may rise yet from that, who knows! I do not recieve any papers from you nor have 117 any of us recieved them with any regularity. I have sent you two printed letters which I hope you have recieved ere this.

I want to know how little Lottie is and [how] her sweet mother and s-- no not sweet dadie are getting on in this world--Cassius is a good corispondent give him a leather medal for not troubling

me to read any of his letters in a number of months I hope he won't bother me with any. Mother and Sister God Bless you both and all every one of you Yours. . . .

Give my best respects to Mr & Mrs Lord and other Friends who take interest enough in me to enquire

I have never heard from Mr Shields--

Father or E.B. I would like to have you send me some letters of introduction to some few persons in New York City so that I should not be an entire stranger there if anything befel me or I should wish to amuse myself--also in Boston. I have never yet had occasion to use those I have and hope I never shall from necessity although I would should I meet Gov. Smith^{*}

Probably refers to General Persifer F. Smith to whom he had a letter of introduction.

To the Friends of the "Madison Boys" Long Bar South Fork of American River Sept 22d 1851 I sit down to write a letter for all of us, having a favorable opportunity to send it by Samuel Drakley and knowing that all would expect to hear from us when he returns I have undertaken to speak for all. We are all well and doing as well as could be expected although the bags fill up almighty slow. The claim in this river 118 in which all but myself were interested has proved & total failure and has been a great loss to all concerned but not so much but that they can make it up in a short time if reasonably fortunate in other mining. Bill Rasdall is working with Ben Wilson, carting dirt from the top of a big red hill and doing very well.

My claim of which you have heard so much has proved to be very rich but the water has troubled us so bad that it is almost impossible to work yet it will pay something this year and more next. I say d--d all river claims

We have not decided where we shall winter as yet nor have we any place in peticular in view. I shall start for Shasty Valley next week to see what can be done there and if the prospect is good probably all will follow me if not all will go South near where we wintered last winter and when we

get the pile on which we have set our hearts you will see us in Madison and I am sure not before Ed George has made something pretty nice and thinks of going home this fall

All of the Wisconsin men in other parts of the country are well as far as we know. . . .

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Long Bar El Dorado Co. Cal Sept 22d 1851 I wrote you a long letter by the last mail from Sacramento informing you of my fall from Proprietor of one of the finest Hotels in town to a common digger in the ground now you may think this a great fall but I do not but a peg higher. Although keeping Tavern is not such Back acheing work as mining, yet [it] is enough harder in other respects to make up, I almost 119 died for want of sleep, being obliged to sit up almost every night untill near morning, and rise early and having the whole care of the house on my shoulders I could not nor would not do it for any amount of money.

I have not worked very hard as yet because I am about the same as though I never done any work in my life, but I shall soon come to it. Ed and I recieved some papers from home but did not find any news in them of any importance but we devoured every thing in them advertisements and all.

I shall go to the city next week and then to Nevada [Nevada] City on business for Mr. Steele who is to meet me at Sac. and am going to Shasty Valley, where he lives, with him to mine this winter He says that we can make money there and I am willing to go any where I can do that for money I must have if it is to be had by honest and fair means if not I shall come to you poor as you say you will recieve the prodigal son money or no money. I have now something ahead and a good prospect of more this fall out [of] the river claim I have bothered you about so much. It is very rich and the only trouble is that the water is a *leetle* too plenty, last weeks work amounted [to] over three thousand dollars and it was a very broken week indeed. I think if there is nothing to stop the work this week we shall take out Eight or ten thousand dollars, but it is getting very late in the season and it may rain any day and stop us for this year but it will be on hand next.

It is now two years scince I arrived in this country and I have not made my pile nor have I lost my good conduct, which you are pleased to say I possessed at home, with the exception of a few triffling bad habits.

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I flatter myself that I have a good reputation in Sacramento city having the offer of several partnerships in Hotels there after I sold out the Queen City and Steele wants me to enter into partnership in a ranch which he has up north I do not know whether I Will do it or not, I like his appearance and manners very much and would as soon go in with him as any one I know of.

If some of you would write and prevail on E-- to go home you would do him a great favor for he is doing no good here he will not work nor will he do any thing else being only a draw back on us. I have been talking to him but he will not go without more money which he never will get here nor any where else I do not say this from any ill will towards him for I love him like a brother and would divide the last cent I had in the world with him, but for his own good, the longer he stays here the less money he will have untill he will not have enough to get home with. Bengaman is trying with all of his might to make something and will succeed with out a doubt he works hard and works every day. He deserves to make money. While E-- is reading and smoking and sleeping Ben is out at work like a slave. I am sorry that I have it to write, but soit is, nor would I have it go any farther than you for the world. I am now at work for Ben & Bill *driving cart* and hire a man to work in my place in the river and water I have no love for work, and will not work in the water when I can help it

Adam Lemon was here last week, he and George have been doing well. He intends to start home this fall. While down to the city I met Mr. Bartram of Cleveland I knew him by the missing finger on one

DEVIL's GATE

121 hand, He wished me to send his best respects to you.

You may perhaps conclude that I have [been] entirely weaned from home and its associations by my putting off the time of starting so often and so far ahead but I know you would rather have me absent a little longer and come home with something than come now with what I have, just think to have it said that Lush come home without making anything and those *Mutton headed B-- Boys made a pile*, You would be ashamed of me and I am sure I should be ashamed of myself so I am bound to have the pile if possible. I should like to [see] little Lottie and have her call me "Uncle Lush" just to see how it would sound. Well, well, Poco tempo^{*} --I have run out of news and the knee of my breeches so I will remain yours &c until I write again. . . .

Poco tiempo --soon.

P.S. Direct letters [to] Sacramento.

To His Father Sacramento City October 27 1851 I send you a draft for (\$392.00) three hundred and ninety two dollars for Edwin R. George which he wishes you to use for him so as to pay him good interest If Henry Abby has not paid George Pain or you (\$400.00) four hundred dollars, he wishes you to use this for the purpose [for which] he instructed George to use that.

I will write you a long letter soon but do not feel like it now all are well. I have had the Fever & Ague but have it broke now Yours. . . .

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To J. C. Fairchild and Family Sacramento City Nov. 27th 1851-- You now have cause to complain of my neglecting to write to you for the first time since my leaving home, and I can give you no good excuse for my negligence, only I have not done it as I ought.

I have been having a nice little turn at the old *double breasted* Fever & Ague, which occupied most of my time for a month, & was truly very pleasant indeed, indeed, it was very; Don't you think so?

Still, now I think I am done with it for the present, and I sincerely hope for ever, I have not been doing much for two months, having several other things to stop me besides the *Ager*, but now, I am in hopes that I shall get into something regular, for the winter.

You will all be disappointed that I do not think of coming home this year, and so am I truly sorry that I cannot, You do not perhaps, understand my feelings, about starting from here, without a small pile, when I see others going with it, but if any one of you were here, you could, There is a something which will not let me start, or think of doing it, in opposition to my longings to see, and be with you. it is not that [I] love money for money's sake, but that I feel as though I ought not, in justice to my self, and you, leave here, while I see the chance of making a competence, and go where it would probably be years before I could succeed. I wish I could love money for its sake alone for a year or so, I could save a *young pile* by it, I do not spree it, nor visit the *Hell holes*, with which the country is swarmed, but still I get rid of an awfull pile of money, how I don't know, I do not refuse myself 123 amusement, nor good board and clothes, all of which cost money.

I had intended to send you a thousand dollars, by Mr. Catlin, but have been disappointed in collecting a note I hold against McKensie, Eds. old partner of \$950, it is secured by Mortgage on the Willow Springs which makes it perfectly safe. What money we had I let Ben have to send to John T. as he had written very urgently for some, and Ben was very anctious to send it. As soon as I get the money on the note, I will send it to you, as I have no confidence in myself to save money, and I do not want to invest it here, as every thing is so uncirtain, as to titles, nor can I do it with a very good grace as my heart is set on going home next year. The last you recieved from me, was a letter which any body ought to be ashamed of, but I was then having the *Ager*, "as [illegible] Dann says", and did not feel like writing, nor would I, if Ed. had not have wished me to send the Draft then. It contaned a Draft, payable to your order for \$392, which Ed wishes you to use to pay Catlin, if the \$400, which he sent by Henry Abby has not been paid to you or George Paine, if it has he wants you to invest it for him in some way so that it will pay him good interest. he leaves it to your judgment Ed. is now on Dry creek where he intends to winter. Ben and I bought him out, and now we are separate, but good friends as ever. Ben. is now here, he had intended to go to Shasty, but has altered his mind, and will go South, with Bill Rasdall.

I shall go to Shasty to morrow, and think the show is good for me to make something, in mining and other things I have in view, but as they are not cirtain, I 124 will say nothing of them now, I

shall winter with Steele, with whom I am connected in a rancho at Shasty Valley, and we intend to mine in company &c. I was up the Sacramento river 150 miles, at Monroes rancho, last week to see Steele and found John Ingersoll of Cleveland there, cooking

It makes me rather homesick to see the Catlins off but I must hang on untill I get the *pile*. D--n the pile I am stoping with Graves here at the National Hotel--our old house, the Queen City, closed yesterday. the "Hombre"^{*} who bought us out, found that he had got into a bad snap, as soon as we did, and has lost money, although he made his brags that he would show us how to do the thing up brown, so he has. I met Doct. Lull last month, he is well and doing well at mining, also Benj Haney.

Hombre --man, person. A few Spanish words were affected by all American miners in California. *Quien sabe*, who knows, see letter of December 6, 1851, is another example.

Mr & Mrs Rice & Fletcher and Lady have arrived. They happened to put up at the next house to this where I was well acquainted, and heard of me, I called on them & had a chat about Wis. & you. Poor Billy Childs, I was very sorry to hear of his death. Things will be wonderfully changed in Cleveland and Wisconsin when I get back, there'll be Lotty grown to a young girl. Cash to a man and Charlie will be nearly a man. E. B. will be settled down into a man of family Sarah down to a man of family too. Father and Mother I do not think will change much--Rover as he grows old will let a kink or two out of his tightly curled tail the town will be almost a city and full of strangers with here and there an old acquaintance among 125 them While I have not changed any, only grown some and full twenty years older, not in body or *sin*, but in mind--Now is the picture true or not?

Oh! how cold it must be in Wis. in the winter, it seems as though you would freeze to death, the only consolation is that nice house and cutter with the G'hal by your side, go it, Cash, go it once in a while for me while I dig the *ore* to pay the Scots have an awfull spree and I will pay for it, only be sure to have a good looking one with you or you may pay yourself which is the same thing scince it all comes out of the same *pile* I will contribute my mite to it soon I hope. I like to think over the enjoyments you have, it does me good but does not make me *blue* because I know my time is coming after [a]while--Business of all kinds is brisk and the miners are doing well and will do well this winter if there is enough rain--I hear that every body is coming out here next year from

Wis. Don't any of you get the fever and come one lost sheep in our family is enough stay there and be contented if you are doing well I should be very sorry to see any of you here very sorry notwithstanding so many are coming back if a man comes once he is almost certain to come twice so don't come the first time. Love to all enquiring Friends and to you all. . . .

I enclose the second draft for E. R. George as you will be sure to receive it

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Sacramento City Dec 6th 1851 I have just taken your letter written by all hands of you, dated by Mother Aug 17th and 21st of Sept, and 126 the same by Father and Charley. It is the first I have recieved from you in nearly two months, and I had been looking very anxiously for something, all of the time. I have written you regular, every month, and sometimes oftener than that, so that you have not recieved near all of them. You have ere this recieved several, if they have gone as they ought, telling you of my closing business in the Queen City Hotel, which I done last August, by selling out to E. R. Perrin, of Bee Town, Wis. I got out of the House clear, but did not make anything, and as regards you[r] cautions against Mr. G--, I can say that I never saw any thing while with him at all dishonest, nor do I think he *hoged* me out of anything, and I generally had my eye on the pile.

The man to whom we sold out has also closed up, because he could not make any thing, so that I think we did not. It is miserable business and I would not go into [it] again if I *could* make money

I have also told you of the seperation of Ed and us, (Ben and I) we bought Ed's interest in every thing we owned together, so that he could go home. He started, and when he had bought his ticket, backed out and sold it. He gave me \$400--dollars to send to you Father which I done in Draft for \$392. percentage out, He wished you to use it so that it would pay him interest, if the \$400--which he sent by Henry Abby had been paid to Geo. Paine, or you, if not, he wished you to use it, to take up his mortgage of Catlin.

I wrote you by Horatio Catlin, who started on the 1st of this month, and enclosed the second draft for Ed. I also gave Mr. Catlin Two hundred dollars to deliver to you, for which I have his receipt.

I would have sent more, but Ben had requested me to let him send some to John T. out of our pile, and I let him do so, as he feels that he ought to. I will send home money, as fast as I can raise it now, as I find it [is] the only way to save it, at least for me. I have a note of \$950--secured by mortgage on the Willow Spring Ranch, which is due and prehaps paid to Ben, who is my Agent to collect it,* when I get it I will send it to you--Scince I last wrote you I have been up to Monroeville, 200 miles north, and expected [to] go on to Shasty to go to Work, but Steele was not able to travell. While I was at Monroes a party of men came in who had been in the mountains to find Quartz veins. and brought in some specimens which they wished to have assayed. so they offered me five dollars per day to come down here, to have it done, if it is good I have a share of it, if not I lose nothing.

Ben Wilson's letter of March 31, 1852, in the Fairchild collection, refers at considerable length to the business here mentioned, as does Lucius in later letters. There was some difficulty in collecting the debt.

You probably know that I am interested with Mr. Steele of Kenosha, in a ranch at Shasty Valley and some stock. I know nothing about the character of Steele, but I can hear nothing against him, and he was Fathers Friend at home, at least I thought so.

He bears a good reputation here, for honesty and I have confidence in him. If we are not disappointed in our calculations, I think we will make something up North, but it is hard to tell anything about the future here, or make any calculations on what business will pay with any certaintty--I always read in your letters the words, "Come Home" very often. Now you know that I want to go home as bad as any boy ever did while away 128 from his mother['s] apron string for the first time, but as I said in [my] last, there is a feeling within me which will not let [me] think of starting, untill I have made more *Gold* [in] opposition to my wish to see you all. I assure you that you are always present in my mind and sometimes I feel a little "*Blue*", but never have I been "homesick," as I understand the disease. I may have some pride about it prehaps, but if it is so' it is natural and I can't help it, I know you would all be proud of me, if I should come to you with a pile, with an unblemished character, & good health, and I would be proud and happy too. I'll warrent you to see me with the two last articles, the first is yet a *Kean Saba* case, but I will do my best, and if I

fail, I shall hold my head as high as though I had succeeded, and try to feel as well--E-- is on Dry-creek, but is not doing anything, at least, he was not, when last I heard from him, I do not think he will ever make anything here, unless he is very fortunate, and strikes a lead in the mines, where he can make it Quick and with out much work. I think a *heap* of E--, but he had not got energy enough to work hard. Ben *puts in* right well and makes his share of the pile.

By the way, I sent to you by Catlin Twenty four or 5--dollars in small specimens, half of which you will have, and John T. the other half. You can have some Breast Pins made, if you fancy them. I never have had a ring or Pin made yet, while almost every young man is covered with them. I do not think much of them besides I always have some project in my head and think I want to use all the money I can start. The greatest drawback we that came here in '49 had, is that we were always going home so soon that we could

FORT BRIDGER

129 not commence operations as we should have done had we known that we should have been here untill next year; You understand what I mean, I think, and it is the same now presicly.

Do any of you remember the big dog that Bill Rasdall Brought from home with him? Yes! Well, he got into my hands this fall, and I took him up to Colusa with me, the last time I went up, and started to take him on to Monroeville, but the Stage run over the poor fellow, and killed him instantly, I felt as if I had lost my only friend, he was a splendid dog, and I could have sold him for one hundred dollars anytime I wished I could have cried, but they don't allow us *Big Boys* that consolation. I met John Ingersoll again at Monroeville he enquired for all of you.

Billy Standart of Cleveland is in this country, at Mud Springs, with Bartram of C[leveland]. I have had an attack of the *Ager* --this fall but am entirly recovered now I tell you it takes time, and money, to be sick, but a person is always pretty sure of some attention, as the people are geting civilized, and there are a great number of women here,--such as they are--but the worst of women will not see a sick man suffer, it is not their nature--Talking of women I have lost nearly all the love and confidence I ever had, scince seeing them in this state, The scum of society must come here,

both married and single. There are a few, very few virtuous ones, but they are almost like chickens teeth It *must* be the country and not the Sex that are in the fault. Throw an *orfull* big chip for Rover, for me Charlie.

So Hatty Dean is caught is she and by my old Friend Prof Sterling,^{*} well I am glad of it, So I 130 am as I shall see her, No I ain't glad either, for I had anticipated having a time with her in Mass. when I went home, I would'nt give a copper to romp with a married woman. She must be a fool to get married when she had a good home to live at and be free Don't you think so Cash! I do I like plenty of elbow room in this world but Cash may not think as I do he is in the land where the girls live and may be caught now for all I know, I hope not! I hope not!

Professor John W. Sterling of the University of Wisconsin.

How is Libby Gordon? Why don't E. B. Dean Esqr stop writing letters to me? he will make me poor paying postage and Cash too, You are nice men to let Charley beat you

Charlie keep on as you are now doing continue to study and go through Colledge with credit let Father and Mother have the satisfaction of having one well educated son in the Family for Cash and I have made fools of ourselves by not improving the oppertunities which have offerred to us Go ahead Charley & I will be proud of *you* as I can not be proud of myself--above all things continue to write you[r] prodigal brother as often and as lengthy as you possibly can--

I should like to see little Lotty right well and play with her as I used to with Charlie, Tell her I am coming. Cash write me a letter and after the family news give me the small gossip of the village you know every thing interests me from home.

Father you asked me to write you a long letter I have done so not because you did so but because I always do it when I recieve one from you and when I grow uneasy for another I feel better after having wrote to you as though I had seen an[d] conversed 131 with you and I have no doubt that I enjoy writing almost as much as you enjoy reading--

I am gratefull for the Confidence you have in me as a ban and will not disgrace you I will as you say decide for myself as to when I start for home and rest assured that I will not stay any longer than I think my duty to myself and you demand--

Present my respects to all friends who enquire after my welfare and remember me as Your affectionate Friend. . . .

P.S. Please tell John T. that Ben has sent him a draft on N. Y. for \$800.00 by mail the first--The *second* by Mr. Catlin.

To J. C. Fairchild and Family December 15th 1851 We started from the house at one o'clock There was seven of us in company mounted on fine lively California horses that had just been caught on the Prarie where they run free at all times being used only once in a while. I was riding a small white mare who snorted and sprang into the air as I mounted. All being ready off we started on the keen jump, three of us taking the lead of our companions and soon left them far behind After a brisk ride over the plains for five miles we came in sight of the wild cattle scattered far and near over the level plain feeding on the dry grass which would only keep wild cattle alive who have nothing to bother their brains about only to pick out the most inviting looking tufts of grass and go to drink, happy life that? to roam over the country free as air no work! No nothing!

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Well, after we had all got together we circled around them, gradually driving them closer together after we had them in as small a compass as nessessary all hands put spurs to their horses and off we went on the full run for home

Now commenced the sport in good earnest.

Away we went as though the very Devil was after us, or at least some of his most frightfull imps. Every now and then some of the wildest of the band would break out of the band and stear for their usual feeding ground with one of us hard on behind straining every nerve to press the horse to his utmost speed and with few exceptions were successfull in turning them into the band Untill

we came up to the carrell into which it was nessessary to drive them when the leaders of the band stoped and would not enter it While we were pressing those near us who could not get any farther [others] broke out and were off like greyhounds while we were after them pressing our nags with & hearty good will being so excited that I did not know much that I was doing. Throwing my arms about pressing my heals to the [horse's] side and yelling worse than the *Diger Ingines* done, still all of [our] exertions would avail us nothing for the young cattle would run and dodge our horses, like the boys in playing the old school game of *Gould* [goal], only more so

But we succeeded in carrelling enough to answer the owners purpose which was only to kill one for the “*hombres*” on the ranch to *heat*. It was killed after being shot in three different places. The Digers at the Ranchere were on hand to take the beef to the house for the priviledge of eating the refuse part of the *critter*

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You never saw a *Diger Moharie* did you? Well you ought to I can't give you a discription of them for the life of me, so I won't try--There is nothing in the world for exersize like taking such an excursion as the above is meant to describe, it is not like taking [a] quiet ride with no excitement--for yourself or horses who I assure you seemed to take as much interest in the chase as the riders I know mine did for as one would leave the main band on my side he would farely bound over the ground keeping his eye on the chase and turn quicker than lightening if it done so. Oh! it was fine, probably more so to me, than my companions, who were hands on the ranch, and this was a great part of their labor, while it was the first time I had been engaged in such *going's on* and I sincerely hope it will not be the last nor will it if I stay here much longer--

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Monroeville Dec. 25th 1851 Christmas Day (& a nasty rainy one)
I do not know of any better way to spend this day than to write you a Merry Christmas and I do sincerely hope it is more merry to you than I can possibly make it without geting drunk and that I shall not probably do as it will not do to begin bad habits at this late day by the way it would not be a begining either for I have been considerably tight once scince my residence in this state but I do not think I shall ever be guilty of such a foolish action again. I have been in the habit of drinking

always while in the mines a little whisky when wet but not from the love of it by any means 134 but because I thought I needed it for my "Stomachs Sake" This is a nice Christmas day to be sure Oh! how it rain[s] and blows and here I am away from all of the boys for the first time among strangers but not I hope without friends around me.

I am waiting here doing nothing for the return of Mr. Steele who has gone to Shasty Butte City to attend to our business there To get there he is obliged to cross the coast range of mountains on which the snow is now very deep so that it will prevent his return untill spring I'm afraid if so I shall leave here and go to Shasty City this side of the Mountains and go to work in the mines. I am also waiting for some provisions for which I have sent to Sacramento City for a Quartz Co. with which Steele and I are connected. The Quartz lead was prospected about a month scince and I took the rock to the city to have it assayed It proved good paying 13cts to the pound of Rock which will pay well for putting up crushers. There has been great excitement about the Quartz veins and thousands are embarked in [the] business of working them. Many I have no doubt will make money and I think many will lose A good set of crushers put [up] ready for use costs about \$15000 to put up one on our lead it would not cost so much from the fact that there is a good water power near by which could be brought into use. I have never been to the lead but shall go as soon as possible for the snow is now very deep for fivty miles around it, but when the snow becomes hard we can travell on it with out difficulty and I think from what the gentlemen say who were there it is a rich Lead if so I would not 135 thank a man to warent me a fortune but every such opperation is uncirtain.*

Conditions in the mining area described in this letter are summarized conveniently in Bancroft, *op. cit.*, vi, 365 ff. and notes.

I have not heard from Ben Ed or Bill Rasdall lately they are in the southern mines somewhere and I suppose doing something as there has been plenty of rain latly I hope so for I am partner with Ben still which I would have you keep to yourselves, as we have never let anybody in this country know it. You may think this strange but we can work in some cases to each others interest. Ed & I have always been known as partners to every body but none knew that Ben was connected with us I believe Ben to be honest and straight up in all of his dealings with me. I let him send of company money home \$800--to John T. which I had intended to send to you but he wanted it so bad that I

consented and so I sent you only \$200--by Horatio Catlin to deliver to Father and when I, or Ben who has the papers, and is my Agent to do the business collects the note I spoke of I will send another nest egg to you I also gave Catlin a letter to you with the second draft for \$400--The first of which I sent you before with instructions how to dispose of it. You may think it strange that I am still projecting new schemes to make the *pile* but it is the nature of the animal man to always be pushing ahead after riches and happiness and after getting the first I am not certain the latter follows nor do I think I would be much happier if I had a mule load of gold yet I would like to have it just to see how it would operate on me I'd *vamos* for home *aufull* quick and perhaps pick up a *moharie* on the way.

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Although I want to see you all very much and think of home every hour in the day yet I am very contented and happy under all circumstances which is more than I could always say so that I think I have got a little of Father's philosophy about taking all things easy and always keeping the bright side of the picture in view--

Jan 1st 1852--Just think of that 1852--& I left home in /49. Old time don't wait for a person to make his pile, but keep[s] rolling along, just as if we were in a hurry to close up matters on this earth, as soon as possible, and make our exit, for t'other place, where all are bound. Well let him roll I can't help it, so let her rip--

All of the past week I have been a going to finish this lovely letter but something has popped its self in the way every day so that I am at last driven to encroach on this holiday still as I said Christmas I do not know that I could better celebrate it.

The extent of mining is embraced in about 3 miles from the head of the creek, down on which I think there is about Sixty-five stationary miners and probably Forty more are on the creek, prospecting a few days, and leaving Making one hundred men on the [creek] all of the time. At the extreme head of the creek is a small Valley 1 mile long, by 1/4 mile wide, commonly called, little onion valley from the great quantity of wild onions growing there, it is also a good grazing place

in the summer. Two miles from the head the creek falls over a perpendicular rock about 12 feet high thence runs through a cannon for a short distance when it again spread[s] out as it is above the falls--

There are several claims paying well, but many more which pay nothing I think the average is about

GREEN RIVER VALLEY

137 five dollars per day to the hand for those working on claims in the bed of the creek--

The Gold lays in leads, that is, there is a strip of ground which pays while on each side there is nothing the lead runs first on one side then on the other keeping in no regular course, neither does it pay regular-one day paying well another nothing

There are three females on the creek, one Black Foot Squaw, one Mexican Senoreata and our slut.

There are three Rum mills & provision stores, one owned and attended by a Russian Jew, named Isidore The second by Capt. Pennington Burton & McKeg. this one is frequented by most of the miners, where they can be found, almost every night in the week, gathered around the card tables, playing Whist, Rounce seven up or crib or Poker. others standing around in Knots conversing on their success in diging, home, &c, &c. The low conversation from the tables can be continually heard. You'll hear I pass--I go a dollar blind--I see it--go two scads better--You'r rounced by God--I made one--Two by trick, honors easy--Fifteen two--Fifteen six--&c. &c. all games are played for the drinks,cigars, oysters, &c. The other store is kept by a spaniard which is not much patronized by the miners. Provisions are high--Flour \$20 per cwt. Pork 40cts per lb. coffee 25cts--Butter \$1.50--Beef 30 & 35cts--sugar 25cts whiskey \$1.50 per bottle--oysters \$4.00 [per] can & other things in proportion. it cost[s] a miner about \$1.50 per day to board themselves.

Each man is entitled to 100 feet of the whole creek up and down and as far up each bank as he chooses to claim, work enough for two or three years if all of the ground payed, but only a small strip does and that is 138 hard to find. before a claim can be prospected a "tail ditch" must be dug to

dread the water off of the claim, on the bed rock which is general fly] very soft slate rock through which it is very easy to cut.

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Monroeville Colusi Co. Cal. Feb. 4th 1852-- You may think that I am not very punctual in sending letters which I have written to you, when you see the one I enclose in this, but if you have ever experienced the feelings one has when writing to persons from whom he has not recieved any thing for sometime, you can, and will, excuse me, when I tell you, that I have not heard a word from you since yours of Sept. 21.

I cannot write when I have nothing to answer--but I commenced on Christmass & New Years day with the determination of sending them directly, but hearing that a mail had just arrived, I did not finish in hopes, that I would have a letter from you, so I have been waiting untill now, in vain, but I will not delay any longer, as I know that some of you write often, and are not to blame if I do not recieve them. I wrote you twice, previous to Christmass, scince I recieved your last. I am still waiting on the Snow in the Mountains to melt, so that I can carry out my plans, in regard to the Quartz lead, which I still think is a good peace of property--

I recieved a letter from Mr Steele this morning in which, he states that he is sick with the Scurvy. So that he cannot travell, and wants me to go to Shasty Vally, which I shall do, in two or three days, if it does not storm. The trail across the mountains is so that it can 139 be travelled, although the snow is very deep in plases. Steele has a large Law Suit to attend to for some one up there--

I have not heard from Ben or Ed scince I parted from them last fall, nor do I know where they are, I have been working for Mr. Munroe as *assistant cook and Table waiter*, in his hotel. John Ingorsoll was first cook. Now in the states you would think that a person, who had kept the Queen City Hotel, was broke, if you saw him acting the part of *hired Girl*. Wouldn't you? but here it is nothing, for all kinds of men do all kinds of work, if nessessary. I had nothing to do, so I thought I might as well earn \$75 a month, and board as do nothing, and pay \$16 a week for board. and I can bob *around the table*, saying "tea or Coffee Sir." about as fast as most *hombres*. I am now at work for a Mr Vincent, of Wis. pressing hay for \$5 per day but he has not Steady work for me, so that I

have time to take a gallop around the country, on my fancy Mare, once-in-a-while. By the way--I saw Sillover, about two weeks scince, he came up from San Francisco, on a Steamer here. The night the boat was here there was a *pow wow* at the Ranchere of Digger Indians and while there I saw S-- for the first time--He sends his best respects to you--He is a perfect *bag of wind*.

I am very glad to see that Charlie is determined to have a good education, and shame his *elder* brothers. Do not give over, until you have you[r] head cramed to its utmost capacity. Charlie, you will never regret it, You strive after *knowledge*, and I will after *Gold*. When we both get what we want, I will *swop* with you--Gold never can make you happy if you cannot be happy without it.

140

I cannot tell you how often I think over everything I know about home, but I--

I shall try to arrange my business so that I can go home next season, if possible--If I am in Quartz Rock speculations, and get them going, I can leave them, for a few months, at least. I do not want to stay here untill I get to think it home. *nor will I ever give up the idea of making Madison my home for life*, if I ever get back there. Little Lotty--I don't know what to say to her, only that I should like to see her--She must be quite a girl by this time. tell her to remember me untill I come back. I feel under many obligations to Cash and E.B. for their *kindness* in saving me the trouble of reading their letters &c. Mother, you are as busy as ever with your work and borrowing trouble about me I suppose--now I do not mean to blame you, for I know you would not take the pains, if you did not love me, but I would not trouble my brains about such a scamp as me &c.

My Boss is calling me to go to work, and the mail leaves to day so that I am obliged to close, one and all remember that I am your Sincere Friend. . . .

P.S. Give my respects to all enquiring friends.

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Rush Creek July 1st 1852 Although I have not recieved a word from you scince last fall and but one paper, I'll not cut your acquaintance, as prehaps I ought to do. I wrote you about the last of March, from Sac. city, or Monroeville I've forgotten which, scince

which time, I have not been so 141 situated that I could write, or if I did write, I had no opportunity of sending the letters to any P.O. but seldom, and this may lay here sometime, before I can send it out. I came here the first of May, or to Cache Valley, on a Quartz Rock speculation, which after a weeks work we found run out entirely, so that it would not pay to stay on it. Cache Valley is 10 miles from here, when we found that the rock failed, we concluded to come here, and *dig* the Summer out, as this creek had a good reputation for paying well.* We have now been at work, six of us, six weeks hard every day, and have made but Seventy five dollars all of us, nor do we know how much longer we will work without making any- thing. I think it will be at least 3 weeks before we will get any pay for our work. We have a claim of 600 feet of ground and it will be something strange to me, if there is not some *ore* in it somewhere, still we may work all summer and not make board. I've known worse things than that [to] happen to miners. So that we take it all as a matter of course, & [do] not fret about it much. Still its hard to work so hard for nothing. Don't you think so? I do, but still I am not any more *down in the mouth* than if I was making good wages. You know that it was just a year [ago] that I was out of the mines, that is, not working myself, and I did intend never to dig any more in my life, in fact, I once *swore* I would never dig for a living another day, nor would I, but I had got out here into the mountains, on a speculation that we had thought would pay, and when it failed, I would not go back to the valley to stay, although, I 142 might have made more money *perhaps*, than I shall here, and not worked hard, but I had spent one summer in the Valley and dreaded the hot weather. Oh! its awfull hot there, while here it is cool all day, with a good breeze, fine cold water &c in short, I have never been in a place in California, so pleasant to work in, The creek runs between two Ranges of high mountains over which the sun appears about 9 o'clock and disappears at 4 o'clock, during the hottest part of the day we are laying in the shade, Heading, Smoking, or playing Whist, So if we do not make anything, we have a pleasant place to spend our days. I have & hired man, who I am paying \$100 per month & board [to], he has not made any more than I have, so you see I am not in very good luck. Steele came out here with us, but both of us could not stay, as we have considerable property and unsettled business, in the Sac. Valley, and at Scotts Valley.

Rush Creek is said to have produced from placer mines alone \$3,000,000 in six years from the date of the first discovery; while Cache Valley was credited with \$4,000,000 in the same period.

He has been back once, to bring up some provisions, with our train of pack mules, and has gone back to operate elsewhere, I think he will make some money for us, if I don't but I feel certain that I will *make something*, before the summer is out, if one half of our claim will pay wages, we have a years work before us, easy, and I'm bound to see the last of it. I was never known to give up a place at the first set back, yet, and I hope never will, the only plan to make money in the mines, is to stick to it, through thick & thin, & save it when it is got, *which but few do* in this roaring country--I wish I could have done so, but I've not fooled away much, but have been either *unwise, unlucky*, or something else, so that I have not as much as I ought to have yet, I'm not broke, I could raise 143 a few scads yet, maybe 2000 clear--nor am I discouraged, although the day for making piles is past. You may think I am foolish to stay here so long, for so little, but you must know, that that good angel hope, is always with me, and I always think that there is something good ahead, which keeps me here, but I think I will surely come home to you next year, this fall I cannot possibly, without loss to myself--The longer I stay here, the more I want to return, not the want of a homesick person, but of one who cannot live happy away from you all. I cannot make up my mind to make this country my home for life, nor shall [I] try, but I'll try to be contented in old Madison all my days--

(I have always told you all *never to come here* and I now tell you again as long as you can gain a good livelihood and lay up something for a rainy day, not to think of it at all. for you would always regret it I am here, and that is enough out of our family circle. You are all comfortably off in the world. so let well enough alone. A sicker lot of men you never saw than the immigrations of this year will be, those who have come lately are sick I tell you. Let every young man, who has no prospect in the States but to plod along and work all of his life for wages, come here, he can be no worse off than before at the worst, and *may* raise in the world, by *Industry* and *economy*, but those who are in good situation in the world, or have a good prospect for the future, *stay where they are* --Such is my advice to all of my friends) You may, if you see fit, put that which I enclosed in brackets, in one of the papers for the benefit of all my friends, they can follow it or not as they see fit. I have not heard from Ben or Ed since I've been here, I do not know where 144 they are located now, this is such an out of the way place that I cannot get letters, papers, or even see a stranger often. It

is lonely & wild, and we live as poor as any part of the miners in /49. There is two little dogeries here, with about a wagon load of good[s] between them. The main part of which is *Whiskey* --Tro. E. Ward of Waukasha is on the creek. He has not made much--Do not believe *one half* the reports you hear from the mines, they are *d--d lies* (Please excuse that D-D) most of them *for instance*, in the Maryville and Sac. papers appeared a piece about this creek, puffing it, and saying we were averaging *1 oz--per day to the hand--now that is a lie* as the average is not over 3 or 4 dollars--such reports are started by Merchants, Expressmen and others, who are interested in drawing the crowd, a particular way, and go to the States, where they are recieved as *truths*, I have known several such lies myself to be published when I *knew* better, as in this case--I know every man on the creek, and know what they are making every day--(Do not be led away by the big stories as I have always wrote you since /49)

July 2d--You must excuse this letter for I am not in a fit state to write a cod straitforward methodical letter as I am out of practice and I've shovelled & lifted Big rocks so much that my fingers are all *thumbs*.

I never in my life have enjoied better health than scince I've been living on this creek. I weigh 15 more than usual and 7 more than ever before so I believe that work agrees with me, although I hate it most heartily.

I do not think that I was ever born to *dig* for if I was I'd be more willing to do it, still it has to be done

DESCENT OF BEAR RIVER MOUNTAINS

145 here and I can do my share when put to it-- *Its Root Pig, or die* with us.

Mr Freese of Cleveland wrote me a long letter last winter which gave me great satisfaction.

The emigration across the Plains has begun to arrive.

Has Mrs. Lathrop found out what that beautifull little Gothic Building back of the Capitol is used for Yet?

Give my respects to all and remember me as your Affectionate Friend. . . .

E.B. Don't write--postage is high here

Cash, Write me--I hear you are getting to be something of a brick. "Qien Sava" [sabe!]

A Gold Miners Lament-- Why will ye dig? Son of man, for the light of whose countenance and the joy of whose presence, my heart yearneth and My Bowells grumbleth, dost thou ask me Why?

Is it not written that Fortune smiles upon Fools? and for the sake of these smiles, hath not thy servant been making a Fool yea, an ass of himself in vain? For three score and ten days he has sojourned in this place--he has dug into the earth--he has dived into the water--he has torn ancient rocks from their resting places, and removed them afar off--he has likewise torn his breeches in *parts not to be spoken of!*--he has rooted into the mud like unto a swine! His *beard* hath grown long--the skin upon his hands and face hath changed its color until he is now likened unto a wild beast and his garments are rent and soiled so that "Sack cloth and Ashes" 146 would be a fine linen and purple unto him. He would fain feed upon husks, but there are none.

Yes, he who times past was wont to fare sumptuously, and to grumble over greater delicacies than were piled upon the table of Dives, now snuffs with gladness, the fragrance of Pork & Beans & gnashes his teeth impatiently over a frying slap-jack. He bolteth a raw onion with unspeakable avidity! Potato skins fear his presence--Beef vanishes from before him and dogs look in vain for Bones--He sighs for the Flesh pots of Egypt, and mourns over the barrenness of the land--In his sleep, nevertheless, the good angel of the past, deigns to visit him and delightful visions are opened to his recollection, for a delicious "bill of fare" and he orders "Oysters & Terrapins for six" only to awaken to his infernal slap jacks & molassess? All this hath thy servant endured. Is he not then a fool, an abomination in the sight of wisdom? And is it not unto such, and such only, fortune dispences her favors? Yet she hath deserted me. I approach her, and she fleeth, I "double on her

trail” and she turneth away? I wait her coming, and she stands still. I secret myself in he[r] path, and seize her unawares! But she glideth away, as though I had caught a hog by his greased tail! “Sic transit” I exclaim as with a sick heart. I revile poverty, and curse fortune. So are not these evils? And wherefore should they be visited upon thy servant? Surely he hath not sinned as other men sinneth. He hath not coveted his neighbor's ox, nor his ass, nor his man servant; nor his maid servant--for be it known unto you, that there are no maid servants here. He hath abided by “the Law and the Prophets”. But the “Profits” have not abided by him. Now, therefore, I renounce these diggins--I 147 absquatulate the premises--“I vamosse the Ranche”--I take off--I put out--I go--I slope--I depart without scrip or provender--taking no heed of the morrow--for the morrow takes no care of me. --Ere five months shall have passed, the shirt-tail of thy servant will be waiving in the breezes of the Coast Range--A remnant of it will be nailed upon the highest mountain that he passes, as an emblem of the extremity to which a man may be brought to in this land of Ophir--Yet, think not, Oh Elieb! I would rend my garments for this alone. Verily I say unto thee, an evil genius hath long pursued me, she hath followed so close upon my foot steps that every thread and fibre of my shirt tail is familiar to her eye. And if in her pursuit of me she gasees upon it, she will at once recognize it, and believing me to be torn *and destroyed by wild beasts*, she will retrace her steps, and thus will I escape her--Ere five days shall have past thy servant will Sojourn in Sonora, where it hath been prophesied that he will prosper with “Amazing prosperity” & heal the sick--As Moses reared the serpent in the wilderness for the children of Israel to look upon and be cured of their infirmities, so will I elevate my “Shingle” among the Gentiles, that they gaze upon it, & be made whole. Their offerings of Gold & silver will be acceptable unto me, and if they live not afterwards, paradventure they may find treasure in heaven.”--The above was written by a Doctor at Douglas flat and published in the Cal. papers--it is too good and *true* to be lost. I thought it would please you, and as I could not write anything smart myself I copied it--Its true to a letter--

Its late and I'm tired so I'll close--Your. . . .

Kiss Lotty for me--Good bye--

To His Sister Rush Creek Butte Co. Cal. Aug 1st 1852-- I have just been reading for the 100th time your last letter (The last I have recieved from home) dated last November 10th nearly a year scince. I have written to you, or all of you rather, at least once a month scince my arrival in California which is about as often as I can find anything of any importance, in regard to myself or the country generally, to write as I have been, as you know, in the Mountains most of the time where one knows of only what is occuring in his immediate vicinity which is of no interest to those far away. I have written twice scince my arrival on this creek and have probably told you all about myself and the digings both times but I take it you are like me anything in the shape of a letter from you is most welcom & puts new spirits in me for weeks after the recieving of it. While at work I think over all it contained and adding much more by the help of my immagination, the days spent thus are not so long as they are now nor do I feel tired half so quick--dinner time comes before I've begun to look for it, then after dinner out comes the letter to be conned over & over, for I've not got weaned from home as yet, but on the contrary I long more to go now than at any other time scince I've been in this wooded country--I've been thinking all the afternoon while at work in the cold snow water up to the knees about what you say in your letter in regard to pride keeping me here and I believe you are pretty near right, but still I don't know if you are or not, I've been here so long and worked so *hard* that I do not like to leave the country without making something nor 149 would you, nor Eliab, nor Cash, nor any of you, in fact. Yet I could now start for home I think with as much if not more than any of the boys who came out with me, but all I have is in property &c--which, I could not transfer into money at a moments warning, but I am taking steps which will settle up all of my business I hope this fall so that I shall be able to start for home next spring Yes I think I'll almost promise to come then wheather I have the pile or not, & yet I don't know if I'm fit to live in a *white* country or not, I've forgot all I ever knew of good manners and the way to behave myself properly in good society in fact I've almost forgot how you all do comport your selves, so that I'm afraid I'll not be much of an ornament to the Fairchild Family--Certainly not in good looks for the boys tell me I've grown *awfully homely* (Don't tell the girls) scince I left & I believe them every time I look in the glass--not in education--for I don't know enough to *last me over Sunday*, nor in anything else, Yet I know that be what and who I will I'll allways be recieved joyfully by all of you. I'll take care you'll not be disgraced by me at any rate. Little Lottie, Why she is not so little as she might be

now either, is she? Well I remember nothing but the little bundle Of white muslin I left at home, nor can I realize that it is now a nice young lady nearly four years old. I'll be around Miss Lottie "Pocotempo" & you will have to toe the mark Or I'll--I don't know what, at any rate we'll raise perfect *Ned* around the house for a whole month, haveing Grandma & Mother down on [us] like hot Bricks, Won't we though? Charlie too is now a young man nearly as old as I was when I wandered from the parental 150 fold, & I thought I was considerable of a *punkin then*, (Tho, by the way I got the conceit knoct out of me right quick after leaving) & I suppose you have the same idea--I have always wished that you would be attentive to your books for I know it will be a great source of happiness to you in future years, tho it may be a great mortification to me to see myself out striped in book learning by my younger brother when I have enjoyed as good oppertunities as he has, but still I say persevere and gain a good education and tho you be rich or poor you will have one great source of happiness which cannot be taken from you. As to my ever being able to learn any more except by the hard experience of the world I doubt it but still I am willing to make an effort if it is the wish of all my friends for I would not like to live a *Mullet* all of my life among those who are living in good Society. I tell you one changes wonderfully after leaving home every thing in life has a different aspect. I cannot discribe it to you for I have not the words to do it with, but you know what I mean.

Now for news--I have not heared from Ben or Ed or any body in fact, but Steele scince last spring early, I do not know where the boys are living. I came on this creek last May in Co with five others and have been at work *hard*, yes, we have worked as hard and regular as any other Six on the creek, no braging, and on an average we are out of pocket about \$100 a piece, except me, I'm out \$250. that is Steele and me, Now that is pretty good ain't it for California. Yet I have hope of striking somthing yet. to day we done better than for some time before made \$36--\$6 a piece--It cost[s] to live here about \$2 per day as we are high up in the mountains where nothing but pack mules can 151 travell--others on the creek have done well and some have done poor but none as poor as us. such luck will attend the miner sometimes but it is bound to come, if he only sticks to it teeth & toe-nail, till the last dog is hung--I'll do it or--My partners are good boys and we live very comfortably together being situated nicely to live having a good tent on logs for a store room and a good large

fire place good large stone Bake oven fine Brush house and sleeping room. Oh! we live up to the mines on pork & bread but few of the luxuries of life, but the staples taste well with a good appetite after a days work--I must light my pipe, excuse my smoking in your face--get a pipe and try it you've no idea how much comfort there is in it--try it. And another thing we have here is a female dog with six of the nicest little pups out I've one of them named him *Rover* of course--Trowbridge E. Ward of Waukiesha is on the creek at work above we are at one anothers camps every night. I like him much--He is sober, steady, & a hard worker, but has made nothing as yet--but will soon--I do not know whether I shall winter here or not, I shall do so if our claim turns out any better.

Saturday Eve. 9th--I'll tell you why you'll find this letter writin on so many days Having nothing to do after supper & nothing on earth to read, not even an old novell--I was in the habit of going up to the *Rum Mill* and of course would be drawn into a game for the Whiskey, so I thought I would dedicate the Evenings, when not too tired to go directly to my virtous blankets to writing to you-- So, if you are bored with a long prosey letter You must bear it like unto the Myrtirs of old bearing in mind that you are keeping your prodigal 152 brother at *home*, such a home as it is, I am keeping & journal yet, though, at times I have not written & word in it for 2 or 3 months still I have it pritty regular--I have, with two of my partners, commenced on & new claim having [balance of letter missing].

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Olily Rancho Scotts Valley July 17th 1853 Scince my last a month scince I've been in good health though I have travelled through the whole of Sacramento valley where it is very sickly now.

I was a delegate to the state convention from this Co, at Benicia, * from there I went to the Willow Springs saw McKensie and to Murphy City saw Ben, Ed, & Bill, all dead broke and making nothing though they were in hopes to strike something soon. They work hard prospecting, and I think will find something if they persevere as I never knew miners [to] fail I got *nary* [a] cent of McKensie on the mortgage, and have it forclosed ready to sell soon if he does not pay up Still I think he has done

his best and believe he means to do what is right. If I sell him out he is ruined, if I give him time he can pay--

General Fairchild, in after years, told his friends he had been obliged to attend that convention in his shirt sleeves, because on the way his mule fell over a precipice, carrying coat and pack down into the abyss below. Charles Noble Gregory, *Proceedings of the State Historical Society*, 1896.

We are still farming our crops are just ripening will be ready to cut next week & look very well considering they were sown very late in the season The frost has killed all of our vines & most of our Potatoes. We have had some very severe frost this month which has done a great deal of damage to others more than us. I think our crops will pay us very well

BEAR RIVER PEAKS

153

I had resolved long ago never to take up the pick & shovell again but this week I shall go at mining again on Scotts Bar^{*} where we have a large mining interest out of all will make some money or lose quite a sum I do not think I'll do much hard work--

Referred to in Bancroft, *op. cit.*, vi, 365.

I like our business it is not hard work but [keeps us] busy travelling riding & so on. We have not a lesure moment always something to do. I took our pack train down below with me and tried my hand at packing for the first time and I tell you I would much prefer *sawing wood* for a living. I spent the Glorious Fourth travelling behind the mule in the Sac. Valley. Now You Bet I felt Patriotic not. thirsty covered with dust & divers other sweet comforts of life around I met Friend & Bro in Sac. City they are in the clothing business but not doing very well, getting home sick. they say they can make no better proffit on their goods than in Madison. Thad Dean was in Sac., too, but I did not see him nor did I wish to. Friend says I aint near as good looking as Cash, how is that--Graves is still in Sac. in the National Hotel losing money--I met Sutherland & Harasthy at Benicia also Frank Dunn, Selover, Grant, & several other Wisconsin men--H. is in the Assay office, San Francisco S[utherland] pratching Law [at] San Francisco how they are doing I cannot tell The country below is improving very fast Farming carried on with a *high hand* and plenty of families Our part of the state is coming forward too and settling up very fast so that it begins to look like a

white country, nevertheless I shall make tracks for home as soon as I get that pile I've written about so often. 154 I am sorry for poor Sarah and could I do anything more than express my sinscer love and sorrow for her I would but, alas, I cannot, I feel the loss, and could any sacrifice of mine repair [it] I would freely make it.*

On account of the loss by death of Lottie.

Hoping that I shall soon be able to return to you & hear from you often in the meantime, I remain
Your Sincere Friend. . . .

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Washington Market, Scotts Bar Siskiyou Co. Cal. Oct. 16, 1853 I wrote you about a month scince, and, 1 must confess, that [I] forgot to send the letter to the Express office, and this morning I found it in my desk, so I must 'een write another--

You may prehaps think, (and very natural to it is) that I have partly forgotten you all, but it is not so.

If you have recieved any of my *very interesting* letters you know that I have been butchering here scince the first of August--which business I still continue and probably shall continue all winter The Market has been good, killing from 3 to 7 Beeves per week, though the proffits are not very large and the expences considerable, still it pays something towards that "pile" I have been working for so long. Now I kill 3 per week and make \$100 clear on them, My regular ounce per day, which satisfies me very well.

Our River claim has not paid anything as yet, nor have I any hopes of its doing so, still we shall continue 155 to work it, untill the rainy season sets in, We are out over \$1000 in cash on it now.

We have our crops of Barley & Oats taken care of for winter having built a fine Granery. The crop is not large and will not pay much over the cost of Breaking Fencing &c, which at the time it was done cost one third more than usual.

Mr. Steele attends to the Ranch and Butchering in the valley I to our mining claims and Butchering here

Now I have something to tell you which will please you, I know. You know the old saying "A fool for Luck" well, I think I have turned fool at last--Two weeks ago a man came to Mr. Jones, a merchant here, and wanted to sell a Bank claim for \$25. as he was broke and could not work in the water Well, we done it, fool like, put a hired hand to work in it five days, when they got down to the bed rock in the evening after sundown and took out in an hour 73 oz Gold or \$1260. Next day the[y] took out 122 ozs or \$2086,--Next 100 oz or \$1675. Next \$560. Next 373 oz or \$6360, in all, five days works \$11,941--The claim has three shares one of which Jones & I own--giving us the snug little sum of \$2000 apiece on an investment of \$12.50. It is the Richest ground I have ever seen in California and I am the *Bigest* fool to have got in to it, 'aint I?

One of the Partners sold out 3 days ago for \$2000 giving him for ten days work \$6000, to go home with. I was offered for my one sixth share \$1500. But I would not take \$3000 for I think it will pay more this fall--Scince we made the \$6360 the hole has not been pumped out, and we are striking another piece of ground, which, if it pays One half as well as the ground 156 we have worked will yield \$30,000 still I do not calculate on its paying so much as that, though I think we are good for another 8 or 10 thousand to the share--I hope so, God knows, for then I *vamos* for home cirtain. This [is] the first instance I have ever seen of a fortune being made in a few days though I've heard of several cases.*

Many similar cases were reported in the newspapers.

I do not want you to tell any body of my making this money and hope you will not, for private reasons. Steele & myself being partners in all things, of course, any thing I make, belongs to the firm--I am glad to have made this fortunate purchase, as he has made considerable practicing Law, which he divides with me, and this will bring up my end of the *pole* In fact we would have had nothing to go into business with last Spring had it not been for his practicing Law to make & starter.

I heard from Ben, a few weeks scince, he has not made any thing, nor do I think he ever will, in this, or any other country. Ed was at our old stand doing nothing (Willow Spring) Bill Rasdall has made nothing this summer.

I hardly know what to say about home, as I know nothing of what has transpired, scince I left, having recieved but two letters scince Sept 1851--one from Sarah dated Washington City & one from Father dated about the same time.

I take it for granted that you are all well and as happy as poor mortals can expect to be.

Poor Sarah I hope she has recovered from the blow of Little Lottie's death.

157

Give my best respects to all enquiring friends And never despair of seeing me Yours. . . .

All this northern Cal. has been in a perfect fever of excitment about the Indian war, which has just closed at Rouge [Rogue] River Valley, Oregon, seventy five miles distant. It was a short but bloody war, in which many valuable lives were lost and large quantities of property distroyed.*

See Schafer, Hist. of Pac. N.W., 215-216. The troubles with the Rogue River Indians which began in serious form in 1851, were not fully settled till 1856 when the Indians were compelled to live on reservations. General Joseph Lane, the first territorial governor of Oregon, performed distinguished service in this war.

We thought at one time the Indians were intending to commence on Scotts Valley and give us a trial, but they did not, and now all is quiet, both here, and at Rouge river, a treaty having been formed with the Indians which gave them all they asked for.

We made something out of the war having 6 horses hired to U.S. at \$4. per day untill the Bill was about \$800.

But few Emigrants have come into this country this year, on account of the trouble with the Indians.

This is one of the finest Farming countries in the world, that is, the vallies, and though small, will, when under cultivation, yeald enough for a good home supply and always bring good prices as for

Fifty years this will be a mining country, and there will be many more consumers than producers as there is not enough land to grow an over supply--

The miners in this county are doing as well as in any portion of Cal. Still but few lay up much money, as it costs a great deal to live and many squander their money on whiskey &c--

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This Scotts Bar is decidedly the Roughest place and the miners the most Rowdy drunken set I have ever seen in my life. Every night some party is on a spree whooping & yelling around town, fighting, swearing, breaking the Rum holes up &c. One night it will be the Dutch (the most respectable portion of men) celebrating some annaversary of the "Fater land". Then the Irish will have a general drunk, when you may look out for any quantity of fights, then the French will take a turn, and sometimes all together. You would be entirely satisfied with our society if you were here a week--

We have for a town 15 houses one garden 10 by 12 one beef gallows and numerous deep holes--

There are 4 stores 3 Pie shops one Bowling Alley one Hotell (a one horse one) & my market, all of which except myself, keep licquor for sale, in fact, it is the staple article here, the very staff of life.

The diggings extend for three miles down the River to the Klamath River and are worked now by about three hundred men, and they are doing well on an average--Wages are six dollars per day or \$140 per month & board themselves, which shows that some are doing well, to be able to pay as much--

4 days later--We go to washing in our claim again to morrow and I shall soon know what the chances are for me to go home this winter--I shall write you again soon. . . .

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Ollilie Rancho Scotts Valley Siskiyou Co. Cal. Jan. 8, 1854. I received your letters dated Nov. 9, 53 yesterday which are the first I have seen scince June last. You

159 may be sure that I was very much pleased to hear that you were in good health and doing well in the world as well as enjoying your selves as far as the law allows.

Father expresses much feeling as to my returning home, and I must confess you are right, but it is hard [to] close out and leave when I have now the best prospect of making that Pile I have ever had scince I have been in the country and have done better for the last year than ever before. I do not know of a firm in the county who have done as well as Steele and I and our prospect is as good for the future.

I will tell you what we are doing and you can judge for [yourself]. In the first place we are farming have thirty five acres of Barley in and up and are ploughing for wheat of which we will sow about 30 acres besides potatoes, Oats, &c, all of which will pay well if they mature well. Then we are the largest Butchers in the county, that is, do the most business, which has payed well, though now the business is falling off in that line, and will probably be closed in a few weeks, if it does not improve. I, as you have learned in my former letters, have been on Scotts Bar for nearly [a] year killing cattle, and attending to our mining interests, which were extensive some payed well, and others lost, all of the poor one[s] are sold, and we have the Rich claim left which will sell anytime for \$800. I once wrote you how that claim payed, in ten days work we took out nearly Twenty thousand dollars to three shares I had one half share in it which was no bad thing for \$12.50 which it cost me. I think it will pay rich next summer though not as well as before. Then we trade in horses mules and cattle & Steele sometimes will take a case as lawyer, though he does not like to do it. [letter torn] 160 together we have and probably will pick up something

Now if anything should happen to alter my prospects I shall pull up stakes and leave for home, but you would not advise me to leave good prospects I am well aware that I am losing time in staying here and learning nothing which will fit me to enter society at home, and I think when I do go back I will keep out so as not [to] make a fool of myself in publik, here the society I have on the Bar is of the roughest kind and I, being the "Butcher Boy" am obliged to mingle with them more than I otherwise would. There is some good society in the county but my business nor my place of residence allow me to join, though I would had I *time* or felt disposed to go to the expence and

trouble of being a nice Ballroom Young Man. I will put off such thing untill I get some where else. Mr Steele is well and sends his best respects to you all, says he would write but you would have to keep his letter untill you saw him, to read it to you, which is the truth "Turkey Tracks" are no where. About three weeks scince a neighbor of ours started for Waterloo near Madison I wrote by him and sent Father a ring from Steele & I.

I am glad to hear that Madison is improving so much and hope to improve it some before I die if only by my appearance in its Streets.*

The Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad, begun at Milwaukee in 1849, had been building steadily westward for four years and was then approaching Madison which secured rail connections in 1854. This gave the place something of a boom.

Are you building that Hotel for yourself or others? Have you ever had any word from Harasthy? Have you ever recd. \$200 I sent by Horatio Catlin?

BEAR MOUNTAINS AT SUNRISE

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Well Sarah! I am sorry you think I am losing what little "common sence" I once had, and you may be right, but I doubt it. One of these days I'll argue the point with you, "by word of mouth" which will please you better than by letter. I did not know but you and E. Bù would wander to Cal. in your travels but I am glad you did not. I went to a supper given by our next neighbor last night, Mrs. Moffit. It put me in mind of home cooking, all ended with a raffle for horses in which I won a fine riding horse,--Now that you know where to direct letters I hope to recieve them regular and will, as I have always done, write regular meanwhile Remember me as of old. . . .

To Wash Bird Scotts Bar--Scotts River Siskiyou Co, Cal. Jan 12, 1854. I have just Recd. a letter from Ben, with yours of Sept. 24 to him, enclosed, and, having a sort of tender spot about the seat of my trowsers, which will have vent when I hear any thing about old Madison, I have sat myself down to let it slicker on paper to you.

I am very much surprised at your letter to think that *you*, a married man could, would or should, think of such delectable dears as *Red-Headed-Mary*. Oh! shame on you, go down on your knees before the wife of your buzzum and ask her pardon for ever having written of such Drygoods. I am sure if I had a wife I'd be on my marrow-bones before [her] half of the time on all possible & impossible occasions, and think I was up to my A--[nkles?] in clover, but, Lord Bless your soul the only chance I have is to prostrate myself before one of 162 the female aboriginies, which don't precisely suit my fancy. But I think I can make the Ripple untill I go to that place you think is "Pumpkins" and if I think so too, I'll stay there.

You say that Father wishes me to return home & you think it best. Its very easy for you to sit on your chair at home and say that, and no doubt you think it very nice and wise, but our "*War Bill*" did not have as good luck as yours (We had one last year) and I did not get that d--d "Pile" I've been after so long-but you did and you lay back on your dignity (if a defeated Candidate can have any) and say you think it best. Well take it out in saying so, and I will stay here until I get that "Pile", so you can tell your young female friends, will you?

I have been for nearly a year a "Bloody Butcher Boy" (not on the shoulder) and have made money at it, but lost it as fast in other speculations I shall Remain here as long as I live in Cal. being up to my eyes in Business, which would require a year to close out, but have every confidence in making "hiu Chickamun,"* this year.

Chik-a-min is Chinook for money; *hiyu* --much. Hence, much money. He had every confidence that he would make much money. The Chinook jargon was the trade language of the Pacific coast.

You can bet, I am glad to hear that M is improving and that "Old Tad" is improving with it. It does me almost as much good as though I had improved myself. And you can also bet high, that I would like to see what sort of a woman took you down the cold stream, and induced you to give up a life of single Blessedness. I can hardly realize how you appear with the heavy burden of a family on you. enough nonsense.

Scott Valley which I call home though my share of the business has kept me here some time, is a fine place for farming and good for making money. We have a fine Ranch and are farming extensively, which, if the crops grow well, will send me home next fall.

You may not like this letter if not, say so and I'll let you go to the D--l in future, But while saying so, just put in what little news you can pick up will you! and do it as soon as possible. I wrote to the Fairchilds a few days scince, but give them my love, and Respects to all of my old Friends & your wife too, if you are not a "Blue Beard". I pity Geo. Paine, poor fellow Old Dave Dalton well I've nothing to say to him--and in fact I'm afraid nothing more to say to any body, only I should be delighted to get a letter from you. I Remain Your Tillicum,*

Chinook for friend.

To His Father Scotts River March 6, 1854 I have just recd. your "lift" to Brother Charlie's letter and I assure you, although I have recd. one from you within a month, I was right glad to hear from you all for at the same time I received Mothers of same date. We seem to have been in bad luck as to getting each others letters scince I have been here but I hope that in [the] future they will come & go regular.

I thank you kindly for your good wishes, not that I ever doubted them, but it does me good to hear them but I do not like your word "Deposit" in speaking of money. Who, pray tell me has a right to my money if you have not? You, to whom I owe so much and sometimes 164 I feel that I deserted you wrongfully when I came to this country but I always felt that I was working for you as much as Myself and feel so still I should not feel that I deposited money with you but that it was yours, & I should have sent money home time & again only I have thought I could do so much better here with it, true I managed to lose & squander it all, untill the last 18 months, but that must be laid to my youth & inexperience in the world & business, now I flatter myself I have more "Gumption" besides having a good business man for a partner, one of the best I know in the county, Mr. Steele--

When we made the big raize I wrote you of I told you all for since then we have not got anything of any amount out & have been at about 2000 expence on the claim.

We are washing to day for the first scince last fall and have not made as much as we expected Our Regular business is doing very well though all of our means are locked up in it and cannot be withdrawn without injury to it. We commenced on nothing and have been increasing our business continually so that we have been crow[d]ed always for money. Nor are we any better off now as we are putting everything we can spare out of our cattle business into a Wheat crop Barley &c. It is very extensive and will cost us about \$6000, to get it in and put the improvements which are actually nessessary on the farm. Still if the crops come well or yield an average crop we will make a good thing of it. For the last four months it has been the hardest times ever known in this county for money, caused by the scarcity of Dust dug in the mines, on account of Stormy weather, high water, &c.

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It requires & we have about \$8,000 worth Of Stock Cattle &c to carry on our concern and we have 8 hired men all of the time so that you can see our expences are very high, over \$1000 per month, still we are making money all of the time. We have latly leased a large stab[le] in Yreka which is paying now about \$300 per month profit, we took it to sell our last years crop of Barley which we have not sold yet, holding on for high prices. I think it will yield us \$4000 or \$5000 which will pay well.

A large quantity of our Potatoes were frozen, worth \$2000, which were all sold, but not delivered, at a very high price 15cts per lb they being the finest lot in the country but it is no use of braging on them now they are gone--

I have just returned here again having been Bot Off by an opposition Butcher for one month & now have the market to myself, though I am obliged to sell Beef 3cts less than last summer If I have no opposition next summer I will have the best market in the country and make at least \$5000. I have got to be a tolerable good butcher and have many warm friends on the river so I could give any man a hard run, who would undertake to cope with me--

Steele is well, he attends to the business on the Rancho & in Yreka & I on the Bar here, neither one interfering with the other. We have always got along well together & I think we will remain in [this] Co. untill we go home, which we are both determined to do next winter if we have no very serious losses which I do not fear. I took an inventory of stock last week, and find that we have now at cash prices about \$12000 worth of property on hand, owe \$4000 & have bill[s] due us \$4050 166 which are good & \$700 not worth a d--n. This has been made within a year with not a cent to start on, but pretty good credit I would not lay my business open to every one but you, I know, will be interested in it & not tell it to others. The main credit of making money you must give to Mr. Steele for I am but a secondary person carrying out his plans and moving on all important occasions by his advice which is very generly good.

I recieved a letter from Ben Wilson, who is in San Francisco working not being able to make anything in the mines--He tells me that E-- G-- without his Knowledge or concent took the liberty of settling my business in relation to that mortgage of mine on the W[illow] Spring and recieved the money of my lawyer for me as he said, and gave his receipt for it, and went direct to San Francisco on his way home Ben followed & over took him, he had loaned \$100, and paid over \$400, and kept \$584.75 to go home with, saying that he would send it back to me. In all he recieved \$1084.75 of which Ben has only recd. \$400, leaving a ballance due me of \$684.75, which he must pay over to you I shall hold him responsible for the \$100 he loaned to McKinsie. I say he paid over \$400-- but he did not pay it to Ben but to Vic. Seaman when he knew Ben was my agent to transact all business in relation to that debt. Furthermore he settled with the lawyer with out my consent or knowledge and did not collect all that was due on the Mortgage, and he must have known it.

There was at least \$400 more due than the Amt. he chose to recieve. I do not understand the affair, I have always thought E-- was honest, but this does not look well, not letting me know by letter that he was using 167 money which he knew I had wanted for sometime, and taking the liberty of recieving it and leaving for San Francisco direct.*

A long letter from E-- to Lucius which was received after the above was written, explained the matter and did much to restore the latter's confidence in his old friend.

You will do me a favor of Seeing him when he arrives and settleing it, find out his reasons for his settleing for less than there was due, &c.

If he pays you any thing consider it your own and use it as such--I will write to him & enclose it in this--

I think you have pursued a wise policy in building as much as you were able and even runing in debt for as you say the rents will bring you out. I wish I had a peck to send you, but I have endeavored to show you just how I stand as to money matters & believe me when I say that I would as soon you should have it as myself only that I know that as it is now invested it will pay four times what it would in Wis. But I will bring it all next winter, if I have any--Your Affectionate Son. . .

I intended to write to Mother & Charlie in this but have run on, untill I have used all my paper and prehaps your patisens. I will write again soon. Is the Mary Scott Mothers cousin Mary Edwards!

Please give the enclosed lines to E-- G-- on his arrival

To His Brother Cassius Scotts Bar Siskiyou Co. Cal. March 31, 1854. You have been so kind & considerate as to write me, probably about three letters in Five years that I cannot resist the temptation to write you one to see if you will ever answer it, or forever after hold your peace. I know 168 you cannot plead want of time, nor want of news, & must lay it to dont-care-a-d-d-itiveness. It is Five years ago to day scince I rolled out of Madison on the Indian pony feeling as if I had left happiness behind for ever.

Never did a poor Boy feel worse than I did, when I reached the College hill, and turned round to take a last, long look on the little village, that held all that I held dear on earth. You never probably will have occation for those feelings & never will know how keen and lasting they are. I felt when out of sight that I, henceforth, was alone in the world and endeavored to nerve myself to the task and be a *man* but it was no go the “Chuck”^{*} would run down my cheeks in spite of me. But dont

think I have been crying ever since, though I think of home often & long to return once more to live.

Chuck --water, in Chinook, flowing water, etc. *Skookum Chuck* --powerful water, or waterfalls.

Other scenes & the business of the journey soon made me “Dry up” & I have managed to take care of myself after a fashion. Do you know I think you the most fortunate of us two that you were better contented to stay at home than I. You will be somebody probably “Some Pumpkins” while I by dissipation exposure & C[alifornia?] have ruined myself for this world, but never mind I have been to blame & must suffer the consequences.

You may want to know what my chances are for the “Pile” I am after, well they were never better, in fact until I entered into partnership with Mr. Steele & left the Boys entirely I always went to work wrong end first. But for the last year, we have set to work right and have made money fast if our crops turnout

SODA SPRINGS

169 well this year, we will be rich certain, but if they fail, woe be unto us.

Our Ranch is being improved largely, about 100 acres under cultivation & 300 under fence a good house, barn, Grainery, and all the out houses appertaining to a farm. We Butcher in the Valley, Keep stable in Yreka, Keep tavern, trade in all kinds of stock, Butcher here, Mining the Richest claim ever struck on this river, engaged in building a sawmill here which will pay well, & looking out for chances to make a spec. all of the time. You may think we have some Irons in the fire but we manage to Keep them all in good order by hard work. I attend to all of the business here. Steele in the Valley & Yreka If we have good luck all round we can close up with ten or fifteen thousand dollars apiece. Still I do not make any Calculation on such an amount, but will give it the best turn I can. We have now about \$14000 clear of debt, all made in 15 months.

Do you know old boy that you have the reputation of being a ladies man. Tom Mormon & others from Wis. say so. I am glad to hear it go it while you are young, I did until I can go it no more. There is only one female in this town, besides any number of “cluchomen”* who “Hyas ticky

Quantuc” potlatch muck-a-muc though in Scott Valley and Yreka there are a great many families & young girls, but I am not running on them now it costs too much to be a fancy man, besides I am not in very fancy business. Butchering, Killing my own cattle & tending the shop, all grease & blood. “if you don't think I'm a Butcher smell of my boots”

Cloocheman, klooitchman --woman, *i.e.* Indian squaw. The phrase which follows contains Chinook words meaning great (*hyas*), gift (*potlatch*), food or drink (*muckamuck*).

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E-- G-- has gone home. he took \$687 of money he collected of mine to pay his way. I wrote to Father about it giving him authority to collect it and keep it. E-- has not made a cent scince I left him & never would, was he to stay here his life time. he has no enterprise nor go-a-head-i-tive-ness in him, besides he is d--d lazy. I made all the money we ever had by hard work while he done nothing but help spend it. Ben Wilson is in San Francisco he has made nothing & never will. Bill Rasdall has made nothing. T-- D-- I have never heard from. Served him right to make him marry that girl. I'd like to whail him once--Oh! I love him, the mean scoundrel--

I have just Bot a Milwaukie paper and see that J. C. Fairchild is the peoples Gov. & the IOOF lodge is in a flourishing condition. If you go to the lodge tell them to A.M.A. I am expecting a rich treat when I return looking at the improvements you have made in Madison. I once *braged* that I would come home with a bushel of money to build a big Block on the City Hotel corner, but, alas! for human Calculations, I got broke trying to get it and you have got the start of me. If I had gone home in the spring of /50 or sent what money I had then I would have been smart but “Alls well that ends well.”

I recieved a good long letter from Byron Hariss this week very acceptable. My Chumy Jones is calling for me to come to bed and so I will Dry up with hoping that you will come out with a good big long letter as soon as you get this. Do not tell that I am getting rich for reasons of my own which I will tell you when I see you and I'll Remain Your Sincere Friend. . . .

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To His Brothers Scotts Bar May 25, 1854 I recieved by the last express several papers for which I am very much obliged to you though I would have prefered a good long letter to them. On one you acknowledge the Ring which is not much but I had nothing else to send at that time God knows a dirty Butcher has no business with such a thing as that on his finger, I answer to the name of Butcher now.

By the way I feel in *perticularly* good spirits this morning for I have found good digins here Two others & I have been runing a drift into a big hill and have struck it good, 4 Bits to 2 dollars to the pan, had great excitement of all hands runing to take up claims, we had ours staked and then told everybody of it. You ought to see them run for the hill with stakes & notices in hand to secure claims, then run to us to ask questions about the prospect we had got. I think they will prove good. My object in paying money to have the hill prospected was to get digings to keep more men on the river so I *can sell them Beef* “sava” [?]

Crops in the valley are doing fine Wheat looks as well as I ever saw it in any country and all kinds of grain ditto. In fact if nothing serious overtakes me “Richard will be himself again” about next February, if there does then “The Summer of our content will be made most glorious Winter” Did you ever hear of the Stage struck Sailor? Well I am the Stage Struck Butcher.

We are now selling Beef here in the valley on Salmon, & on Deadwood, being the largest Butchers except one in the county. I have just started another Shop down the river which is doing well

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Yreka was burned down last week the greater portion of it, but, California like, is nearly built up again. I tell you, they are fast people, used to all kinds of ups & downs in life,

I met George Hicocks here not long scince on his way over to the vally to settle, but I do not know that he did, Mother wrote me that Mary Cook was in San Francisco, is it our old Cousin Mary of Cleveland. Our Town is improving very fast it now has Twenty five houses in it with [while] several others are going up,

This River has the best reputation of any other mines in the northern country still but few make their piles here.

26th 3 o'clock P.M. The *eclipse* of the Sun is just on the Dockett nearly total. Our Saw Mill is at work doing well. We will make about \$1500 to the Share on it and not run it over two months Lumber \$100 per Thous.

I have at Divers & Sundry times been homesick but on the whole, I am very contented and will be, untill I have 10,000 scads ahead, then I'll be so d--d sick that you will have to doctor me, for I'll marvell for America.

Has E-- got Home? Has Father recd. a letter from me telling him of the money E-- used of Mine, if so tell me what was done about it.

Extensive preperations are being made for flumeing the River this year One Flume will be nearly 1/2 mile long & use about 60,000 ft. of Lumber. We are in that one, as it takes the water off of that Rich Claim of ours leaving it in good condition to work^{*} I do not 173 make any calculations [as to] its paying big, everything connected with mining is so uncertain, but I do think it will pay \$2 or \$3000 to the Share easy enough. If our crops come well and other opperations prosper as well as usual and we cannot sell the farm at a reasonable price, I shall come home on a visit and bring Steele's Children back with me, but I am in hopes to close out entirely. The farm is now worth about \$8000 if we get pay for all the improvements on it, it has cost *us* that much. Ben Wilson is in San Francisco Broke. Bill Rasdall is down South some where ditto. I never could prosper while with them.

Extensive flumes and canals were constructed in that region within the two years following.

Charly, old Boy, How are you! Quite a young Buck by this time eh! Dont leave Colledge untill you know somthing. I tell you, if you neglect the present time, you will never cease to regret it

I would now give *forty rich claims* (if I had them) to have a good education, but I hear Cash, that you are running on petticoats go it while you're young, but never marry. I'd not marry the best

woman that ever trod shoe leather, now that I have seen what they are when released from the restraints of good society. I've got all I want of them in the marrying line.

You can bet I'll never be caught by one for keeps, if I do, God help me.

I dont think this is very interesting so I'll quit dry up Charley write you little hound Yours &c. . . .

To His Father Scotts Bar Syskiyou Co. Cal. July 14, 1854 I have just recieved your letter dated Washington May 10, with how much pleasure you know, when I 174 have not recieved any thing from home in over a month, except several papers from Cash & Charlie, for which I am much obliged

Your letter seemed to reproach me with lack of confidence in regard to my affairs here which I assure you *is not* merrited, as I have several times given you a full synopsis of all my opperations though I believe not half of my letters have reached you. & I assure you I would have sent you money when I first had information of your circumstances had you not expressed an oppinion that you would be able to get through by borrowing which I know could be done there easier & cheaper than here, where money is worth 60 per ct. per annum, a price we have often paid to get through tight places & had I ever drawn any amount out of the firm it would have caused us to pay that for the same so you see that it would have been bad pollicy to have drawn for I consider that I am working for the interest of us both & the rest of the family & I hope to make the thing win in less than a year if we have no very bad luck. You can judge for yourself. We have the Rancho with about \$8000 improvements on it. Viz 320 acres under fence 70 acres Wheat nearly ready to cut and as fine a crop as I ever saw, 30 acres potatoes 25 of which we have put in for the use of the Indians & recieve \$800 for it, 30 acres Barley, volentary crop from the crop last year, which is a fine crop, better than last year. All of the Barley we have contracted to the U.S. troops at \$3.75 per bushell besides oats & garden stuff. House Barn graniery and all the ordinary outhouses commonly on a farm, also about \$4000 worth of Horses Mules & Farming utensils & over \$5000 worth of Cattle which we are killing here and in the valley, here at a good 175 proffit, there at just about *none* as there is stiff opposition by a Mr. Shores who has 300 head of beef cattle & says he will run us out

of the Market all over the county, but he can never do it as we have too many friends who will buy of us. Still we may have to sink money at it for a time He is down on us because we would not buy his cattle at a large price, now he can trot his horses out and try the race. Steele makes something at Law & trading in stock of all Kinds. Here I have the Beef to Kill & sell doing all the work myself with the help of one man. The one fourth of a good Saw Mill just built at a cost of \$6000 and a good Market for Lumber, which costs us \$20. per M. & we sell for \$100.00 per M. I think we will sell 150 m this year. 80 m. is already gone which will about make our mill clear That Rich Claim we have yet but have not got any thing out of it having been scince last fall taking off top dirt & geting ready to work it this summer, the Chances are that it will pay rich, but I do not make any Calculation on it. We are also engaged in another mining speculation here, digings I found myself, out of which we had a big prospect, & will know in three weeks how it will pay. We have now on hand & good debts due us about \$25,000 & owe about \$8000, which we have to pay before our harvest or mining claims or mill will yield us any money, so that we shall be pushed up in a tight place, and will probably have to pay that big interest for a time. We have always been hard up, commencing as we did on nothing 18 months ago, and always being in debt & pushing forward two dollars as fast as we made one. But we have always kept our credit good. Now it is as good as any firm in the country. 176 We have the reputation of being worth at least \$40,000.

I have given you a true sketch of my affairs & you can judge whether it would be well to leave such good prospects even to gratify my earnest wish to see you all, I attribute most of our success to Mr. Steele's good business habits & untiring industry. he is a very popular man & one whom all run to for advice on any trouble arising, while I am nothing but a boy as yet.

I forgot one good thing that is the manufacture of Fanning Mills. We stock the builder for one half which will pay at least \$1000 clear proffit. We have 25 nearly ready for market, price \$100.

I have wrote to you many times in regard to that Harasthy debt, & latly wrote to him & recieved an answer in which he refuses to pay it saying that you took *Dor* at Sauk for the debt in preference to him, when he would have paid the cash before leaving. If you think he is legally holden for it & will send me the nessessary papers I will try and collect it.

I was a little hasty, when I wrote the letter to you of E-- G-- as I afterwards recieved a line from him, which had been delayed, telling me that he had taken the money & would pay it whenever I said Collect it & keep it as your own.

When I first saw the dating of your letter I was afraid you had gone into pollitics again & was glad to hear that you had not Truly times must have changed in the old sett to place you in the situation you say you are, still I think it is for the best & hope to see you gov. of the state yet. I have not heared from Ben Wilson latly nor Bill R. How on earth did E.B. fail! I thought he was on as good a foundation as any house in Madison.

STEAMBOAT SPRING

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Mother, Sarah & all must consider that I have written to them and all of you may be sure that I have not got weaned from home and friends though I do stay off here so long. Nothing but the *almighty dollar* could keep me & that will do most any thing in this world. When I think of home I cannot realize that it has grown to be a city. I remember it as I left it & will not be at home in it. You can consider mc the same as when I left as I [have] not changed much in any way. Neither grown smarter nor handsomer nor much larger & by way of contrast I have a boy at work for me, Butchering, over six feet six in his stockings so I am the little Butcher. Tell E-- G-- never to come out to this state again as he cannot do anything for himself here being too *lazy*.

I want you all to write me often as your letters are a sorce of real pleasure. Any thing will interest [me] even to the smallest details of Family matters.

I have nothing to write you about myself only I always ought to write to tell every body not to come here with the expectations of making a fortune in a short time, for they will certainly be disappointed. I never saw so much poverty in any country as there is here on this river, not over one in ten have money to pay their board, not a cent. It is a bad place to do business though all miners are very sure to have money in the course of a month.

I will write again soon Meanwhile I Remain Your affectionate Son. . . .

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To J. C. Fairchild and Family Washington Market Scotts Bar Siskiyou Co., Cal. Aug. 1st 1854 I never did write but one or two letters directed to either of you individually, and so help me Jake, I'll never do it again. My line to Cash seems to have kicked up quite a dust in Charlie's feelings, but I do not deserve your reproach, Charlie, Bless your soul that letter was meant for all, as are all I write. I have but one theme to write on, that is, *myself*, & if I wrote to each one, it would only be the same old story over again. We are in bad luck, as to recieving letters from one another, I think you write & know I do. Yours of June 12 has just come to hand, containing a copy of E--'s letter. I'll tell you what I think of it. Ben Wilson writes to me that Grant told him, that E--, when the mortgage was cancelled, said he would be responceible to me for all the ballance if Grant would cancell it. The ammount I do not know. Probably about \$500.00 being all the costs which had accrued & attorney fees.--Now E-- tells a different tale & not knowing which is right, I have told E-- to pay you what he sees fit and take your Receipt & I will arrange the Balance with him when I meet him. As far as his bills are concerned I must confess they surprised me. The one hundred dollars due him on his share of the mortgage was arranged between us that Ben Wilson was to pay it & I supposed I was entirely freed from it, though no writings passed between us, we had never done business in that way. Nor did I suppose there was any need of it. His Bill of time & money spent as witness is not entirely right. He knows & I do too that I would never 179 have brought in a bill of the kind against him under the same circumstances. The money he spent I am willing to pay & probably shall have to pay it all, still, it is not right. I bought him out, he said he wanted to go home, he got the money for his share of every thing when I know I could have made just as much alone as we did to gether. He Knows that should I ever get every cent coming to me Principal interest & costs I would not be even. While I was hard at work, he laid on his back reading novells & smoking cigars. Not attending to his business which when well done would not have been hard work. I do not want to *Gass Myself up* to you, but am telling you the simple truth, which the other boys will tell too, I am now, in some measures, the same as he was to me, but I do the best I can, though my abilities are not as good as Mr. Steeles.

Let him pay what he will & when I meet him if he will not pay & do what is right he can keep it. Thank God my prospects are good for money enough to make it a matter of perfect indifference to me whether he pays it or not.

Our crops are now being harvested & look fine. The Yield will be about 28 bu. to the acre of wheat which will bring \$6 per bu.*

The price mentioned seems to correspond to the price of flour, which he has previously given as \$20 per cwt. Times are hard & money scarce though we are in hopes of the "good time coming"

We had an offer of \$5,000 for the Ranch but would not sell.

The weather is very warm, very bad for the Butcher.

Write By Adams & Co's Express--The Express is just off & I must dry up

180

Seal the within letter & give it to E--. Read it. Yours &c. . . .

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Scotts Bar Nov 17, 1854 I ought not to attempt to write you in my present state of mind for I have got the "blues" awfully, and have had for several days. Not that I have any peticular reason to have them, more than I am geting tired of this country, and, in fact, *homesick*, for the first time scince leaving home, though often before I have required all my philosophy & firmness of mind to keep them off. But I begin to think that I am rich enough to return to you and live comfortable, & I hope, contented, in my old age, for I am getting old. I feel it, and look like it too, every body tells me.

As far as money matters go, I cirtainly have no cause to be "blue" as we have been doing well and in fact first rate on that Rich Claim we bought into last year. It has paid over \$2500. clear to us this summer but as an offsett to it I am sinking money every day in another mining speculation on a

large scale, still I have confidence in it, and shall prove the ground thoroughly before I leave it or "go in" on it.

We have sold out our Butchering business in the Valley and rented the farm, to be worked on the shares preparatory to getting ready to close up every thing as soon as we can without sacrificing too much. Steele is at work thrashing the wheat and will get it into the Mill either sold, or to grind soon. I shall close the Butchering here soon, I think, though I may possibly continue all winter, as a large portion of my time will be spent here, attending to other business, & I can about as well attend to it, with it as not. I am determined to go home as soon as I can, you may depend on that, though I might change my mind if some one don't write to me once-in-a-while. While in the Valley last week I met George Hickcox of Ridgway. He has a Rancho about 10 miles from ours, and thinks he has a good prospect of making money, being determined to remain there until he does--I believe in five years I could make \$40,000 farming in Scott Valley, if I could content myself to live there that long, but a farmers life I could not lead. Never have I passed more than two nights on our place consecutively. I am too Lazy to make a farmer, too much given to sleeping in the morning &c.

Butchering I like well, & you may see me working by a block at Madison sometim. I flatter my self I am some" at cutting up muck-a-muck, & selling it to the honest miner.

I have got a fine picture of the largest flume in Northern California, in which we are interested Also one of a portion of the Flume diggings and our town, showing our hill diggings &c, both of which I intend to send to you the first opportunity also one of my humble self. I had a better one but a "Petticoat" muzzled it. What would you say if the above mentioned article had something to do with the afore said blues--You can't prove it though?

This is the best county in the state for making money, though we live hard in the mountains, where the Elegant [fixtures?] of life would cost a fortune. I have now, for the first time a good room, nicely lined with calico and a good bed, with at least one sheet & one dirty Pillow case So I think I am one of the 182 Aristocracy of this burg. You never dreamed of such a rowdy hole as this is, all summer there was not an hour but what some one was drunk in the street & fights have become so common

as not to excite any curiosity even to run & see them, there is now in my shop not less than ten all drunk & disputing & will probably fight soon. This is a true picture, Every body drinks freely, even myself have swallowed enough cocktails to float a skiff^{*} still I am *very temperate* according to our standard of morals Gamblers, loafers, loose women, and all the scum of society are here (or have been) in full force--and all manage to live well on the better classes of men--Our county town Yreka is just as bad on a larger scale. This is the dark side of us--We have good men here to and som pretty good society (all men)

The exaggeration is confessed in his letter to Sarah dated March 17, 1855.

The Rainy season will soon be with us and then times will be dull for several months.

I hardly know what to ask you about as I know nothing of your doings of late but live in hopes that I shall hear from you soon. Tell me, is our old cousin Mary in San Francisco & what is her name?

Give my Respects to Wash Bird and all enquiring friends

For yourselves, you know that I remember you all with love & affection. . . .

12-30-1854

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Scotts Bar Dec. 30, 1854 (Wish you [a] happy Christmass) I have sold out to Mr. Steele and shall be able to leave here about the first of May, if nothing happens more than I know of now.

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He is to give me \$10,000--by the 20th of April, which I hope will be "pile" enough to suit us all--

You can bet high I feel good to think that there is some chance of seeing you so soon--

Steele says he shall go too if he can close out the property to good advantage but I do not think he can do so as soon as that. I am now very busy settleing up my portion of the business here for his benefit When I get that done I shall take a trip to Oregon to see the country and transact some

business there--I still have my interest in the Rich Claim which I think will at least pay enough to carry me home--

Don't I feel pleased. Perfectly Boyish about it, in fact too good to write more now

Love to all of you Yours. . . .

P.S. Send me some letters of introduction to some one in N.Y. and E.B.'s. Friends in Mass.

To His Brother Charles Scotts Bar, Jan. 20, 1855. I am coming home next Spring certain. Am now intending to start from here by the First of May--having sold out to Mr Steele everything except my interest in the Rich claim, which I wish to work two or three Months yet, as I am in great hopes that it will pay big, though if it don't I shall have a good stake to return with, enough at least to satisfy my pride.

I send this pictorial to you as it gives a good representation of several localities on the plains-also some good mining scenes on the other--

Excuse this short letter as I will tell you everything myself before long--

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Tell old Price & "Jenny" that his brother & family live in this county and are well I shall go and see them before I leave--Your Brother. . . . Love to all the family--

To His Brother Charles Scotts Bar Jan. 28, 1855 What do you think of our commandments? Good I think.

I have no news to tell you now only that I am coming home in May & that I have told you twice. You recollect Dan. Ross who lives south of Madison don't you? He came out here in '49. Well he is going home with me certain, tell his friends so--

I have just returned from Yreka this evening--Went over with a party of six to see one of our Merchants off home--G. W. Price of New York City son-in-law of the famous Sands of *Sassaparilla* notority--had & high old time and punished "high U." good things. This is the first pleasure trip I have ever taken in the country and I had better have staid at home now, I'd have been about two hundred scads better off--Your[s] in Sorrow. . . .

To His Sister Scotts Valley Febry, 16 1855 I recieved yours of Dec 25 last week, and should have answered it directly, had I dared, but you gave me so many covert hints, that you had lost confidence in me, & my ability to take care of my self, and succeed in making that Pile, about which we have written so much,

A QUARTZ MINE IN SCOTT VALLEY

185 that I reflected a long time before I came to a conclusion what kind of a letter to give you, though I well know, that I have the ability to write but one kind, that is to tell the truth & nothing more. Now don't immagine, Dear Sarah that I have any grave sins or faults to confess, though God knows I have committed enough of the first, and have in my safe possession many of the latter, and I think I can keep them too, if nessessary. Your "Come home" which you seem to think tires on my car, is, I assure you, sweet Music to me, though I have ever resisted every feeling, which could influence me to close business here, and return to you, as I had made up my mind firmly to stay here untill I had correllled the aforesaid pile, and I should have left my bones here before I'd have gone home without it. Don't you think I am right? I know you do, although you call the feeling "absurd Pride", but I think you gave it that name only to induce me to give up what I consider a laudable ambition.

I would look fine appearing in Madison poor after being here five years, after such men as the Brooks' and Catlins had returned in /50 & /51 with grand Cash Now come out and acknowledge that I am right & that were it otherwise you would be ashamed of me--

I could not think I would be doing justice to my friends at home, or myself, in leaving here, when I *knew* that I could in a very few years make an independence, which I might labor and toil for a life

time at home. I have always felt confident that it was in me to do it, and thank God it's done, true I have spent perhaps the bloom of my youth here in a wild country exposed to every temptation and evil yet Dear Sister you seem to have entirely forgotten that [I] have always 186 ways dearly loved & respected you full enough to think on and be governed by your good advice, and, though I say it myself your good kind letters have done much towards keeping me *within sight* of the straight & narrow path, which I believe you follow and, though I have contracted many bad habits, I think I can return to you without much cause to be ashamed of myself, but you can soon judge for yourself as I shall leave here for home in *May* next, having sold out to Mr. Steele all of my interest in our business for that purpose. I have an interest in the Rich claim on Scott River yet which I wish to work until that time feeling very confident that I can make one or two thousand dollars out of it.

I am giving up a business which, I know will pay \$107000 the coming year, but, I had long ago, set my mind on a certain sum which should constitute my Pile and having made that I obeyed your earnest summons to come home, and “dried up,” leaving the prospects of making money for the substantial joys of home & friendship I can, I think, truly appreciate your worth and the worth of all the Fairchilds at home to say nothing of Dean's Sister Hattie! Well if she don't become a good & dear sister to me it will not be my fault Won't we have glorious times together! We'll renew the days of '46 tho perhaps with different feeling on your part, you poor Sister having suffered much while I, in spite of my six years rustle with the world am yet a hair brained boy. Why, I have not even altered in appearance except that I look more care worn than when I had never had a care for the future-- When will there ever be a girl as good as you! I tell you Sarah you have always been my model of 187 woman kind, and I don't think much of them, because I have met [no] one who could be compared to you. Show this to Hattie & E. B & if they do not agree with me the[y] do not deserve you as a friend, so say I.

Charlie, I am Glad to hear that you are doing your self credit in your studies, which is more than your elder Brothers ever done, never give up until you have a good education. Cash I don't go a cent on as he is either too lazy or don't care enough for me to write he's a politician too.

But Dear Father and Mother are they not a grand couple Sarah! I think so at any rate there [they are] the best Father & Mother I ever had. I want some letters of introduction to some one in New York as on my way home I may have some monetary business to transact there. I will write often as long as I remain here and will in a short time send some money home to Father

Give My best respects to all enquiring friends and love to all the family & Libby Gordon, and Dear Sarah remember me as Your own Dear Brother. . . .

To His Sister Scotts Bar March 17th 1855 I recieved yours of Jan. 21, just now and having let my usual time of writing you or someone of the family slip by, I hasten to answer it knowing as I do that, though you are borrowing trouble uselessly, you do so through your regard for me, and I must plead guilty to having written several of my letters in rather a foolish, flippant style and though prehaps I told nothing but what was true, the style would make you believe my conduct worse than it really is. Now I will tell you 188 Dear Sarah, who & what I am, who I care for and what I am doing--

Long ere this reaches you, you will have heard, from me, that I have sold out, and intend to start for home in May next, so that at present I am doing nothing much, overseeing that portion of the business which I have had the contrroll of for the last two years, for Mr Steele untill he arranges his business in Scotts Valley, when he will come down here to live. I am not very busy and when I get ennuid I ride out to the Valley & sometimes to Yreka in both of which places I have a large circle of acquaintces and I may safly say that they are the very best in the county, both families & otherwise.

That young infantile sea of Cocktails was a very foolish thing to write about I confess, but Sister, though I have drank for two years and drank what would be considered *hard* at home, Yet I can assure you that I am in no danger of becomming a drunkard as I never drank for the love of the Licquor, having somtims past weeks & months without useing it. Now, I only write this to assure you that I am all right in that particular. One great fault I have is of telling every weakness I have both to you and others, I do not think I have the least hypocracy in my system but tell every thing I think, Many times when I had not ought to-- As regards the "Petticoat" I do not know what I

wrote so that you can see that there is no danger of my coming home with a wife, God forbid, talking about that I would not marry the best woman who ever wore shoes, And for good reasons of My own--reasons, that no person on earth could refute, so what ever I said must have been gass--You must know that somtims when I have 189 sat down to write home I have done so with spirits depressed and in no mood for Writing so that every thing I wrote, after the news of how I got along health &c. was forced out by the conviction that I ought to write, and that you might possibly be interested in most any thing which come from your once Pet Lute. No person can avoid having the "Blues" sometimes no matter what the situation of affairs in life, You understand. Scince Christmass I have been to three Balls two in Scotts Valley and one in Yreka and have thus become acquainted with many who have lived in the County as long as I have but, heretofore, as I have never spent a day for pleasure I have never met them and I can safely assure you that I am in no danger of being caught in any matrimonial trap, as all of the Young ladies are of the "Pike County" stock, though I did enjoy myself *hugely* dancing it being so long scince I had taken part in any thing of the kind "The Cross eyed Sucker Girl" I spoke of is a very good simple thing with whom I have conversed three times and as I danced with her three times the boys of course would have it that I was "gone in" but I was well aware that she was engaged to be married to a very fine young Man of my acquaintance, and I was told to day that it will take place next week--so I slip up there sure--

Our Ball at Yreka was the nicest affair I ever attended it was given by the Odd Fellows in their hall being a strictly Odd Fellows Ball except that the Married Folks outside of the Lodge were invited. There were 57 ladies present & 60 Gents. I must say that they were the homliest company of Ladies & Girls I ever saw, On the other hand the finest looking Gents, (Your humble servant excepted) I ever saw together. 190 Among the Ladies was Mary Price Cousin to our *Jenny Price* a very pretty girl her parents live in Shasta Vally and are well off having a very fine Rancho known as the Eagle Rancho They send their respects to the Nice Price family--I have some good friends at Yreka, there is Sam. Fair our County assor. as fine a man as God ever made and Jay Berry a Lawyer Rasbourough our Indian agent and many others whom I think a good deal of & I think they do of me.

I am very sorry that you are alarmed about my morals and I dwell on this theme not that I wish to make you think I am perfect but to assure you that you may safely consider me far above the common herd here, though not coming up to your pure standard of Morals. I know Sarah that you are far above the Common run of women & that your kind love for me will take alarm from the smallest short coming of my humble self, and I do certainly consider the love & esteem of you for me far above that of any other individual on earth, always excepting our Parents. Nor do I tell you all this to quiet your alarm, but I have told you the same many a time & I am sincere too. You want to know how I look &c I'll tell you. I am 5 feet 8 in high, light hair, thin face, large nose, of the Roman order, no whiskers worth mentioning, pretty good teeth, only dirty, rather round shouldered, Bow legged Monster feet something in the shape of a half moon, only not quite, large hands & always dirty, have generally dressed very rough, but within three months have "slicked-up" and wear "Biled Shirts" sometimes with a very high standing collar and when in Yreka Boots Blacked for which the darky got 50cts But I must confess that when I attended the Balls I had on Borrowed Clothes every thing but under 191 clothes, also I sported a \$200. watch (at another mans expence) Still am one of the two best dressed Men on the River and that aint saying much for myself Certain--

I made a very *gentlmanly looking Butcher*, But am a poor excuse for a gentlmanly looking *Gentlman*

The other Best dressed man on the River is I. M. C. Jones of Layfette Ind[iana] he has been traiding here all the time I have been Butchering, and we have always entered into outside speculations together, as the Rich Claim, the Saw Mill, & the Hill digings, we have always Messed or boarded together & slept in the same bed and never have had a hard word pass between us, either in business, or other wise, he is rather vain & thinks he is a lady killer which is true to some extent, wears a beautiful pair of Mustucthets on his upper lip, which he takes great pleasure in twirling Commodore, as we call him, is one of your easy going men don't care for money and seems to be always happy, is a great favorite with every body, though he never seems to take any pains to attract them, I think a good deal of him and we are very close friends, though in many respects very different. He is closing up his business and preparing to leave for his home with me in May,

having made a good fortune here--I think Com. & myself can do more business on this River than any other two men on it and have more friends than any business men here--

There is no hotel or Resturant now and we board at a private house [of] Mr & Mrs. Iba a young married couple--The ladies former husband ran away from her last summer & is now in Sacramento so Soo married Iba and though she has committed the crime of Bigamy & 192 knows it, she is a very nice woman indeed and makes her home a very pleasant one to frequent--

Charly you say is doing well, I'm glad of it, I'm glad to that he is "Short" for I am too & we will run together--

That Hattie of yours must make up her mind to think a *heap* of me whether I deserve it or not for I am determind to be happy with you all, & I cannot be so unless you all go your Pile on me too. Cash I don't believe cares a--a--cent for me or he would have been & little more "write full" Give My love to Libby Gordon and Prof Sterling also to all enquiring friends--

If any body wants to know bow to make a fortune here I'll tell them--

As the time draws near for me to leave I cannot realise that it will be over six years Scince I left you & if [I] look in the glass I cannot see that I am changed except in the cut of the hair and a little older look--yet so it is--

And now dear Sister I close this with the hope that you will not judge me untill you see me and know me, then I'll listen to any thing you have for my benefit

Mr Steele sends his respects to all--

And think of me as Your *Brother*. . . .

To J. C. Fairchild and Family Yreka Cram Rogers & Co's Office April 5, 1855 Yours of Feb.

1 came to hand yesterday and pleased I am to hear that you are all well, though as an offset you

Father speak of approaching old age, and though it is painfull for your children it cannot be so to you when you reflect that you have grown old in an honerable

LUCIUS FAIRCHILD AS A MINER

193 life loved & respected by all whose love & respect you care for. You all express much pleasure in regard to my return home & long ere this reaches you, you will have heard from me that I am nearly ready to start--

I have told you that I should start the first of May, but it may be that I shall not untill sometime in June as yet I have not fully made up my mind

I can leave at the time first set, but I shall have to either sell out my interest in the *Rich Claim* or leave it in charge of Mr. Steele, though I prefer staying & attending to it myself for I have great confidence in its paying well. The cut [which] we have now nearly ready to wash out will occupy untill the last of June. Mr. Steele may possibly want me to stay untill that time, to give him time on some money due from him, if so I shall be under obligations to do so, as I consider him the great cause of my prosperity scince we have been together and I could not with a good grace force him to make sacrifices on account of what is due me.

I have been in this town a week, on the grand Jury & shall leave tomorrow for Scotts Bar--I wrote Sarah a long prosy letter last week which when you read [it] will tell you all about me & mine-- Dan Ross will return with me and though it may be in the hot months, I have no fears as to health being strong & hearty. I wrote sometime ago that I should send some money to Father and should have done [so] before this had not the Banking houses become unsafe. Now I think it better that I should keep what little I have and bring it home myself--

Give my Respects to all outsiders and the family can consider me *One of them* in spirit & truth. . . .

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To His Parents Yreka May 2d 1855 Your[s] of Feb. 51 came to hand yesterday, containing a letter of introduction to Messrs Leland N. Y. which I shall certainly use--

I wrote you last week that I intended to go to Oregon, and did so, but on arriving at Jacksonville Rouge River Valley I found that the business which I was on could not be expedited by going farther and returned, being very anxious to get started for home, which I shall do by the 15th of this month Dan Ross goes with me--

Health good and all right. I am very sorry to hear that Sister Sarah is sick, hope to find her well when I have the pleasure of meeting her--

I have not seen nor heard of George Lathrop--

I attended a May Day Ball last night, consequently, do not feel very bright to day having rode nearly fifty miles yesterday and danced untill after day light this morning

My farewell spree for this Country--

You may look for me next month certain meanwhile I remain Your affectionate Son. . . .

P.S. I was told by Mrs. S. S. Brooks who is [in] correspondence with T. W. Sutherland, that he wrote to her to tell me that Ben Wilson had started for San Diego by a Sail Vessel & the Vessel had never been heard of since. Probably lost with all on board

I give it to you as I got it. Perhaps it would not be well to tell it as it may not be so--

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APPENDIX

Anecdotes of Fairchild's California Experience Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 25, 1930. My Dear Dr. Schafer:

I wish now I had asked my father to tell me more about his early days in California, but when I was young life seemed so full of present adventure that my father's children, and indeed the whole

family, lived in the present thinking little of the past. My father surely lived that way and, at the time of his death in 1896, he certainly was not in his “anecdote.”

I do remember three tales he told me when I was little more than a child and I send them now to you because I believe they illuminate the period and should be included with the California letters.

One: When the rush across the country after California gold came in 1848 he was sixteen years old and in 1849 at the age of seventeen he came to the conclusion that he must share in that great adventure. He never discussed his decisions then or in later years, but thought his plans out and announced them.

One day he walked into his father's office and said to him, “Father, I'm going west after gold; I've bought a yoke of oxen and charged them to you.”

His father, J. C. Fairchild, raised his eyes from the ledger on which he was working, looked at his slender, tow-headed young son and remarked, “Better make it horses, Lush,” and went on figuring.

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Two: As my father was crossing the plains, he and his horse wandered away from the rest of his party and suddenly he found himself lost. No sign of the caravan; no sign of another human being; just rolling Prairie, waving grass, clouds in the distance. For several days he was alone with his horse, no food and above all no water. The horse was spent; he got Off and clinging to her bridle they stumbled on.

Father told me his tongue was so swollen that he could not close his mouth; his horse's tongue out, black and swollen. They stumbled on together; they tried first one direction and then another; they were too exhausted even to think. Then came to his ear a strange trickling sound. My father told me it sounded to him like a wee bell; but the horse knew, for he snorted and pulled his master toward the sound.

So they came upon an arroya, rippling over stones. My father fell upon his stomach to drink; the horse gave him a shove with his nose, and he rolled into the water, then the horse rolled in after him. The horse did not drink until his whole body was saturated with the ice-cold water. Father did as the horse did and together they lay in the shallow stream and soaked and soaked. Father always believed that instinct taught the horse that to drink meant death and believed, too, that his horse had saved his life.

He loved to tell us this story, and we children always had the impression that his horse was a little horse! As man and beast lay there in the water, suddenly across the horizon, against the sky, slowly moved oxen, wagons, people, not more than a mile or two away. Refreshed, wet, jubilant, they raced toward this caravan.

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None of this tale sounds quite true but it is no stranger a tale than many of the adventures of my father's life.

Three: When my father left California, after six years there, he came home by the way of the Isthmus of Panama and by boat to New York. He wore the dress he had worn in the West. Can't you see him in his high-heeled, bespurred top-boots, big sombrero, like the one in his photograph, and his money in a belt around his slim waist? Twenty-three he was!

On the journey home he heard much of the wonders of the telegraph, then coming into common use, so he decided to send a message to his mother announcing his arrival on a certain date. He wrote out his message, heard the telegraph operator tick it off and said to himself: "That darn thing will never reach them." Then he forgot all about the message; the whole thing was too impossible. He arrived home more than a week late to be received by a frantic family mourning him as lost.

When he arrived in New York he did not know where to stay, but he did remember a song, sung by a pretty dancing girl in a saloon in Sacramento. The chorus ran: I'm going to the Astor House to dine, And I won't be back 'til half past nine.

Then the girl did a double-shuffle.

So he went to the Astor House and stayed there until he started west for Madison and home and mother.

I am at a loss to explain the carelessness in spelling and composition which marks these letters. It is not to be observed in his letters or private papers at a later period of his life. But for my father's singular freedom from affectation of every sort, I might almost suspect him of affecting these crudities as the one respect in which he submitted to the rough atmosphere about him. However that may be, I agree that the letters should not be amended, but should be printed as he wrote them.

Possibly, as he insists in several of these letters, he had not taken his school opportunities, which were generous, as seriously as he could have wished particularly in these literary matters. You have suggested that during the interval between his return from California and the beginning of the Civil War he gave himself a rigorous training in the “niceties” of composition. This is not only a natural inference from the fact that he held a clerical office, clerk of circuit court, which called for the exercise of great care in these respects, but it is readily demonstrated from his voluminous correspondence. The letter to his mother from Camp Scott, Milwaukee, May 25, 1861, is a good example taken at random from the Civil War correspondence. It reads: Camp Scott Milwaukee May 25th 1861 Dear Mother I wrote you a long letter the other day, &, just like me, carried it in my pocket until it was very old.

We of the 1st Regt are getting along very nicely indeed, having plenty of good health, good quarters, plenty to eat, &c, &c. and are very well contented, only that we are very anxious to go to the wars. When that will be I do not know.

Co. K had several nice presents today, two large baskets of cake from Mrs. Foresman & Frank Hood, two from Mrs. H. L. Palmer, & a batch of nice pies from Miss Weeks, besides several individuals had little nic-nax given them. We are under many obligations to the good people of Mil. for many kindnesses. Night before last Co. A. the “Light Guard” had a dance in their Camp,

at which some 40 ladies were present. The officers of the other companies were invited & had a general good time. I went in & spread myself as well as I could with thick army shoes on.

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I often go down town & eat dinner or supper with some of our friends, all of whom are very kind.

Uncle Frank made me a present of 3 cups, saucers, & spoons, looking glass & ice pitcher so that we are living in style.

The boys at the other end of the Camp are burning Jeff. Davis in effigy, (its 1/2 past 8 P.M.) while the band is playing Yankee Doodle.

Every day we have calls from Madison People, to day Ephe Darwin & William Wyman called.

Chas is well, & rather enjoys Camp life. I, you know, always thrive on this kind of life, so I am now in first rate health. I do not think I shall be in Madison before we go.

Give my love to *every* body who enquires after me, & tell them I am sound. I had no letter paper.

This letter is for the family, & I will be better about writing hereafter.

Good night Lucius Fairchild.

The above I recognize as characteristic of my father's mature style. The only reminders it contains of the California boy are its vividness of description--the "thick army shoes," the 'cakes' the boys received, the burning of Jeff Davis in effigy at "1/2 past 8 P.M.) while the band is playing Yankee Doodle," and the confession of his delight in camp life. Sincerely, MARY FAIRCHILD MORRIS

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